THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

In a recent number of *Theology To-day* (an American magazine, hailing from Princeton) there is an interesting article on 'British Christianity,' a survey and critique by Alexander Miller, who is associated with the Student Christian Movement in New Zealand. The writer singles out, as major influences touching British Church life from within the World Church, first the Ecumenical Movement and, second, the theological revival which originated with Barth's work on the Continent.

The Ecumenical Conferences of 1937 left a deposit of thought which has been fertilizing the Church life of Britain through all the war years and has been effective in building up a Council of Churches thoroughly representative of every trinitarian non-Roman tradition. Through the influence of William Temple and J. H. Oldham this Council registers the stage in inter-church understanding and co-operation which was reached at Oxford and Edinburgh. Within the necessary limits of an official and representative body, it is solidly established and full of promise. The most significant of its by-products is the Christian Frontier which was born of Dr. Oldham's sense of the need of a Christian instrument 'flexible to contemporary needs.'

The Frontier is a nominated group representing not the constituent Church bodies as such but the best minds available in the whole Church in the frontier area between theology and technics, between the Church and the social order. Its journal, 'The Christian News-Letter,' consists of material which is relentlessly examined by a group of specialists, theologians, literary men, technicians, and politicians, before it is finally written up. Though it is a very effective instrument of Christian witness, it has two weaknesses. Oldham's mind is so irenical that his pronouncements are apt to be too non-committal. And, in the second place, the group has largely failed to win the co-operation of the workers' movement generally.

But more important than the Ecumenical Movement are the theological lessons being learned. There is a body of work closely related to the Ecumenical Movement itself and issuing from two different groups. One is non-Anglican and it is explicitly indebted to Barth. The other is a type of high-churchmanship which, while loyal to its own tradition, is catholic enough to look beyond it. The future of the Church depends, Mr. Miller thinks, upon the readiness of all parties to agree that every church, whatever its formal order, must be submissive to perennial reformation by the Word of God.

The writer claims that even more important than any of this is the appearance of a truly ecumenical theology—the dogmatic system of Barth. This is not to claim that it offers a confessional basis for the re-united Church. But the point is that it is a comprehensive dogmatic system wrought out in awareness of all the life-and-death issues of faith and order which constitute the Church's problem, so that no theological work can claim to be serious that does not come to terms with Barth.

The danger in Britain is that the theological revival of which Barth's name is symbolic may be either patronized or perverted, either of which does more injustice than open opposition. For example, there is a wide-spread tendency to treat Barth's contribution as just an over-emphasis of a definite truth—the sovereignty of God. It was a necessary protest against the Liberalism that identified Christianity with progressive idealism. Barth, of course (so the argument runs), went to an absurd extreme, and we can't have any of this

nonsense about the ' altogether otherness ' of God and the total depravity of man. After all, the Kingdom of God may come in history if we work hard enough at it.

This, says Mr. MILLER, is all rather insufferable, for in fact Barth's essential contribution has hardly been appropriated at all, or even understood. The general working theology in Britain is Platonist and idealist, religious rather than Christian, wedded to natural theology and a false apologetic. It does not take seriously Barth's insistence that all theology is commentary on Holy Scripture. It thinks it has understood Barth when it substitutes the philosophical idea of the sovereignty of God for the Reformation and Confessional principle of the authority of the Word of God in Christ, in Scripture, and in the testimony, which is scripturally grounded. That is to say, it has not really come to terms with Barth's theological starting-point or his theological method. And it will be a thousand pities if British churchmanship now feels it can pass on from Barth.

We can overcome idealism, pietism, and pessimism alike, in Britain, as elsewhere, if we will take with utmost seriousness the meaning of the Biblical proclamation and the Apostolic *Kerygma*. In the statement of the Acts and Epistles is the basis for a view of history which rejects both optimism and pessimism, idealism, and humanism, subjecting them to an affirmation of the total rule of Christ in a Kingdom which has not to be built because it is already established and has been from everlasting, a Kingdom whose lord is sovereign and whose claim is total, a Kingdom in which all men are subjects either as citizens or as rebels.

Mr. MILLER's survey does not stop at the region of orthodoxy. He recognizes the debt we owe to the heretics. And of these he mentions two—Max Plowman and John Middleton Murry. Plowman is not perhaps very well known. But the writer thinks the collection of his letters of the last thirty years, published under the title ' Bridge into the Future,' one of the most revealing documents of our generation.

Murry is, of course, better known. In the years between the wars he was, Mr. MILLER says, the most acute interpreter of the developed self-consciousness of our generation, especially in relation to Christianity. His work is unequal. Some of it contains a passionate and inspired account of the real sickness of Europe which bred the war. But ' The Betrayal of Christ by the Churches ' is poor stuff. He is, thinks the writer, manifestly unsure of his ground. ' I think he under-estimated both the resilience of the democracies and the power of renewal of contemporary Christendom.' It would be a mistake, however, to under-estimate the importance of what Murry stands for. The Church does stand in need of rebuke on various grounds.

Its jingoism, for one thing. And its class-consciousness, for another. We have learned the need of ' perennial reformation ' in doctrine, but we are not so ready to submit to it in discipline and life. Theological reform presents problems enough but it is still easier to improve our formulæ than to amend our ways, and there is a great deal of intractable stuff in the organic life of a Church entangled, as the contemporary Church is, with the life of an old society. The growth in England of small communities of a semi-monastic kind is not only a protest against the values of an acquisitive industrialism but an effort to find a better way in brotherly living.

Mr. MILLER finds in this the significance of the Iona Community in Scotland. In two respects. In the first place it is an experiment in reformation—including *economic* reformation—within the Church. It is an interesting comment on the residual hold which the Church of Scotland does have on the general life of the community that in Scotland there has been no rebellious growth of Christian communities outside the Church, but that the most notable spearhead movement of Christian advance is within the Church itself.

The other respect in which the Iona Community is significant is its determination to hold an economic concern in line with its concern for liturgical and theological renewal. In England the Movement of theological revival and the Movement of radical Christian social experiment go forward in disastrous isolation from each other, the one inside and the other largely outside the organized Church. But the truth is that the life of the Church is an organic life and its obedience an organic obedience. And it is only as this is realized that the Church in England will rise from the pit into which it has fallen.

Books on the Bible pour from the Press year by year. Sometimes they have nothing new to say, nor even anything in a new way. But the Rev. Corwin C. ROACH, Dean and Griswold Professor of Old Testament Instruction at the Divinity School of Kenyon College, Gambier, Ohio, has approached the Bible from an unusual angle. He asks, What

are the preaching values in the Bible? And in giving his answer he has added a useful volume to the popular literature of homiletics—*Preaching Values in the Bible*.[1]

Dr. ROACH, who was a distinguished student of Yale, and is an Episcopalian of the Evangelical School, has lectured on the subject of his book, for a decade and more, to theological students and at clergy conferences. He now offers his material to a wider public in its maturest form, and we are of opinion that the book should prove of help to preachers.

It might be well to indicate the scope of the treatment. An initial chapter, having to do with Preaching on the Difficulties of the Bible (its age, its cultural outlook, its variety), is followed by chapters on Preaching on (1) the Bible as a Whole, (2) the Books of the Bible, (3) the Ideas of the Bible, (4) the Persons of the Bible, (5) the Archæology of the Bible, (6) the Geography of the Bible, (7) Contradictions and Combinations in the Bible. The second last chapter is on Preaching with the Help of the Biblical Languages, and the last on Miscellaneous Approaches in Biblical Preaching. Obviously it is a varied programme that is set before the reader, and it affords a great opportunity to the Biblical expert.

Has this writer seized his opportunity? A perusal of his pages shows that he has, within the limits of his treatment. What the book in effect offers is a series of subjects for the preacher, with some hints upon them; and it is not assumed that the reader possesses a critical knowledge of the Bible. Indeed the book is intended for the young and inexperienced preacher, and much of what is contained in it should have been, and probably has been, given to him in the course of his training in the Divinity School. Indeed the writer himself draws freely upon the Biblical exposition of our time. He appears to owe a special debt to the homiletical books of Dr. James Black.

[1] The Cloister Press, Louisville, Ky.; $2.50.

Here are some of the suggested subjects from the fifth chapter: The man to whom God spoke the third time—Solomon; the man who lost his coat—Rehoboam; the man who sold himself to do evil—Ahab; the man who fled from his victory—Elijah; the men who kept silent—The Loyal Seven Thousand; the man who overlooked the little things—Naaman; the man whose greed consumed him—Gehazi; the man who saw life through a window—The King's Captain; the man who whittled away the altar—Ahaz; the man who refused to face the future—Hezekiah.

There is a good deal of up-to-date information in the chapter that illustrates the preaching values to be found in the archæology of the Bible. Sometimes the author is tempted to find associations where there may be none. For example, he says that a sermon could be preached on the influence of the perfectly proportioned Parthenon on the mind of St. Paul. It is an attractive sermon-outline he offers, but why the Parthenon in particular as in St. Paul's mind when he speaks of 'the breadth and length and height and depth'?

The chapter that draws upon the geography of the Bible is also of interest. For example, a series of Lenten sermons on the life of Christ is outlined, following the mountain peaks of His life: Mount of Dedication (that name is preferred for the place of the so-called temptations), Mount of Isolation, Mount of Instruction, Mount of Refreshment, Mount of Misunderstanding (the name given here to the Mount of Transfiguration), Mount of Preparation, Mount of Disillusionment, Mount of Attraction, Mount of Ascension. The reader familiar with the Gospel story should be able to identify the references (though it has to be explained that Gethsemane, the Mount of Preparation, instead of being on the top of a mountain was probably an olive grove situated somewhere on the slopes of the Mount of Olives).

Towards the Conversion of England.

What Next?

By the Venerable C. H. Lambert, M.A., Archdeacon of Blackburn.

It was in June 1945 that the Report, *Towards the Conversion of England*, was presented to the National Assembly of the Church of England. It was given immediately wide publicity in the Press, and during the last eighteen months it has been presented to, and studied and discussed by, clergy and laity alike in large numbers within the Anglican Communion and by many Christians of other denominations. It has been criticized, sometimes wisely and strongly, sometimes unjustly and ignorantly, and sometimes with angry petulance. A reaction of this kind was not unexpected. It may be taken as evidence that the Report has got 'under the skin' and is entitled to be regarded as a realistic document, both for the courage and candour with which it faces the facts of the moral, spiritual, and intellectual conditions of contemporary life, and for the restrained and unsensational manner in which it presents its case.

Previous articles have dealt competently with many of the findings and recommendations of the Report. Together they make a valuable introduction to the Report, often interpreting and elucidating aspects of it which, for a variety of reasons, could only be dealt with briefly. The purpose of this article is to consider, in the light of the reception of the Report by the Christian community and by many outside it, and of what has already been written in this magazine, the response which would seem to be demanded from the Christian Church. Perhaps I may be allowed to say that the conclusions I have reached have been influenced by a year's tour of the R.A.F. in this country as Archbishops' Visitor before the Report was published. During this tour I had opportunity of putting the case for Christianity in lectures, addresses, and group discussions to thousands of men of all ranks and drawn from all walks of life, answering their questions and listening to their observations. Subsequent experience has served to confirm these impressions.

First, *there is need for the re-discovery of the Gospel by the Church itself.* There is much in *Towards the Conversion of England* about ways and methods of evangelism, but quite the most important chapter is that which deals with the Gospel and its presentation. I do not find this chapter theologically adequate. More could and should have been said, for example, about the revelation of God in Christ and about the Atonement and the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless an invaluable service has been rendered to the Church by this setting forth in outline of the Gospel of the Blessed God. While it is important that we should see clearly the gravity of the present situation, it is much more important that we should be in no doubt about the Gospel of which the Church is both a part and the instrument. It is failure to be convinced of the Gospel and to speak with burning conviction of it which is the reason for the failure of the Church as an evangelistic body. We have been 'bitty,' piecemeal, in our understanding and teaching of the Gospel, and we have not always chosen the best bits. There have been times when the preaching, teaching Church has emphasized one aspect of the Gospel almost to the exclusion of all the rest, and so to have come perilously near teaching 'another gospel,' denounced by St. Paul as an 'accursed' thing, whether it came from the lips of a good man or of an angel.[1] It is not surprising that the nature of Christianity is misconceived to-day. Men do not think of it as a religion of deliverance, of the intervention of God, of the invasion of the natural by the supernatural, as good news. The Gospel has been humanized, emptied of its supernatural character and of its fundamental meaning as the work of God in Christ by the Holy Spirit for the salvation of man. Men turn to it to appraise or to criticize it *for what it is not, primarily or solely*, a system of ethics, a programme of social reformation, as giving a religious sanction to the best ideals of a deeply secularized society, or as one of many philosophies of life. There is cause in all this for grave self-questioning by the preaching and teaching Church. 'The time is come for judgment to begin at the house of God.'[2] It would be difficult to deny that the modern pulpit has been too much occupied with moral exhortation, too little concerned with doctrine and dogma, too often engaged with pious platitudes, too seldom employed in teaching the need of penitence, in proclaiming the truth of eternal life and judgment. We have lacked the strong, sturdy spirit which led that great Congregationalist divine, Dr. Dale, on taking up his ministry in Birmingham, to reply to the warning of a neighbour that he should not try to preach doctrine for the people would not stand it, 'They'll have to stand it!' We need to *re-discover and to*

[1] Gal 1^{8}. [2] 1 P 4^{17}.

proclaim the unique, distinctive character of the Gospel. The Gospel must be seen, known and proclaimed with prophetic conviction as true in itself and for itself. It must be proclaimed as news, good news of the action of God, as that which God has done and does, for God is. The Gospel is fact, it is happenings, the happenings of God. It has taken place at a moment of history, in point of time, but nevertheless it is timeless, not confined to a historical moment, transcending all time, changing all history, significant to every man whether of yesterday, to-day, or to-morrow, because it is the mighty work of God. Again, the Gospel must be seen and proclaimed as a Gospel of redemption from sin and evil, as that which God has done for man which man cannot do for himself. It is the announcement of a great deliverance, consummated on the Cross, guaranteed by the Resurrection and brought to man *now* by the power of the Holy Spirit. It means new life and new power, an eternal life, *here and now* and fulfilled in the heavenly places. Further, it is a Gospel which demands judgment. Judgment is an inescapable truth of Scripture and there is nothing sentimental in its treatment of it. Neither should there be in our treatment. It must never be forgotten that it cost God more to redeem the world than to create it. God cannot deal lightly with sin. It must never be suggested that He can. Still further, the Gospel is the Gospel of life in fellowship. Christianity is the family life of God, realized and experienced through membership of the Body of Christ, the Church of the living God. This is the conception of Christianity authorized by the title deeds of our faith. There is no such thing as a churchless Christianity. The New Testament, apart from the Gospels, is largely a story of the life and teaching, the ' doings,' of the divine society, the beloved community of God. Christianity is life in Christ, experienced and fulfilled in His Body, the Church, by His grace in response to faith and penitence.

It is the ' wholeness ' and changelessness of the Gospel that must be preached and preached in the thought-forms and the language of modern man. We need to labour in mind and soul over this matter of the presentation of the Gospel, for it is the simple fact that our liturgies, enshrining the truths of the Gospel, and our theology, in expounding and explaining them, are full of expressions that are meaningless to the present generation of men. The Church almost speaks another language ; once again there is need to make ourselves understood of the people.

The first great need is the re-discovery of the Gospel. *The second is the re-discovery by the Church of itself, laity as well as clergy, as an evangelistic body.* Of the first great age of the expansion of Christianity, it has been written, ' The most numerous and successful missionaries of the Christian religion were not the regular teachers, but Christians themselves, by dint of their loyalty and courage. We cannot hesitate to believe that this very great mission of Christianity was in reality accomplished by means of informal missionaries.' Every Christian was an evangelist. What was then a fact must become a fact now. The Gospel is entrusted to the whole Church. The Church is clergy and laity, and, while to the clergy are given special functions and duties within the body, the task of propagating the Gospel is laid upon the Church *as a whole.* The problem of mobilizing the total man-power of the Church for the work of the Church is a difficult one. It is very much *the* problem of evangelism. It is a problem of ourselves as a worshipping community. The impact of Christianity on a post-Christian world cannot be made without the positive witness to their faith, in the conditions of daily life and work, by all who profess and call themselves Christians. *Towards the Conversion of England* states Christianity suffers from lack of personal recommendation. This is undoubtedly true and it cannot be accounted for solely on the grounds of a natural shyness or reserve about religion. A man may well be shy or reserved about his own personal religious experiences. But the need is not that every Christian should lay bare his own soul. Spiritual nudism is not what is wanted. What is needed is that every Christian should speak the truth in love. That he fails to do this is due not so much to shyness as to lack of knowledge or lack of conviction. People are often dumb because they are mentally and spiritually numb. Better sermons preached in a better way will not do all that is necessary to put right this unfortunate state of affairs. We can no longer rely on the sermon alone to break the intellectual paralysis and to stimulate the spiritual torpidity from which the Church is suffering to-day. The sermon is not the best educational method of instruction. It has a place, an honourable and valuable place, in the life of the teaching Church. But something more is needed if the men and women in our pews are to become convinced and convincing Christians. The development of adult education is moving fast along two lines. First, there is the tutorial class, demanding persistent, intensive, detailed study under a competent teacher, and, secondly, there is group discussion which provides opportunity for the consideration in small groups of a subject introduced by a speaker to the assembly as a whole. The Church must use both these methods. The cell might well be regarded as the counterpart of the tutorial method. It is the formation of a small number of people meeting

regularly together to study the Christian faith and life on the background of prayer and worship with the avowed intention of giving Christian witness in common life. 'For their sakes I sanctify myself'—this should be the ideal and aim of every member of a cell. He seeks fitness in mind and spirit to do the Lord's work amongst his fellows. The Christian Church grew out of a cell, the cell of Christ and His disciples, and it is no exaggeration to say that the cell, in some sense, has made a great contribution to every religious revival, either as its beginning or as the means of its continuance. Side by side with the cell a place should be found in the teaching life of the Church for group discussion, and particularly for answering questions. My own experience in the R.A.F. has quite convinced me of its value. A recent experience in another sphere has strengthened this conviction. I was privileged to take the chair at gatherings of sixth-form boys and girls in two Lancashire towns. The Student Christian Movement was responsible for the arrangements with the whole-hearted co-operation of the heads of the schools. The introductory speeches were excellent, the group discussions intelligent and lively and the questions asked were neither trivial nor frivolous; they were theological, philosophical, devotional and practical. They showed the great need for instruction in the Christian faith, how great and common are the misconceptions of the Christian religion and how damaging to sensible living and sound morality is the ignorance of Christian verities. As a stimulus to the formation of cells in the congregations and to the adoption of group discussions the parson is well-advised to preach a course of sermons on the great doctrines of the Christian Creed, and to give his people an opportunity, either immediately after the service or later in the week, to discuss what he has said in church, school, or hall. A Parochial Convention, which is a coming together of the people of the parish every night in a week for a course of instruction in the Christian faith, can be used effectively for the same purpose.

A place also must be found in the normal life of the Church for the Moral Leadership Course (or something similar) which was used largely and effectively in the R.A.F. by Anglicans, Free Churchmen, and Roman Catholics alike. It had real educational and religious value and stimulated Christian witness and fellowship.

The Church to-day, as the Report rightly says, is a field for evangelism rather than a force for evangelism. It needs equipping with the truth of the Gospel in knowledge, spiritual understanding, and purpose. *A start must be made with the material we already have.* The Gospel can get into the world with converting power only through the men and women already within the Christian Church. They are the points of contact with those who are outside, the living bridge between the Church and the world. 'How can we reach the outsider?' The question is often asked by clergy and ministers. The answer is: 'Through the insider.' The Christian laity are already where the Christian Church wants to enter with its Gospel. They are in homes and factories, schools and colleges, trade and profession—they are in the world. What is needed is that they should make a difference wherever they are, a Christian difference. And so they must be different men and women, inflamed with the love of God, shining with the light of His truth, walking before God and man as children of light. The Church possesses many good men and women for whom much has been done but with whom and through whom little has been done. Many causes, religious, political, and social have been won with considerably less human material than that possessed by the Church to-day. The resources of the Church have never been adequate, humanly speaking, for its great task. But what is humanly inadequate is adequate for God's work when it is placed at His disposal. Let clergy and laity, then, combine everywhere in a great work of instruction in the Christian faith, practice, and service. Let the clergy provide leadership in training, and for this readily accept training in leadership. Let the laity provide men and women to be trained. We do not ask the laity to do the work of the clergy for them; we ask the laity to do the work which God has entrusted to them as well as to the clergy.

Thirdly, there is a great need for the re-discovery of the one-ness, the unity, of the Christian Church. The divided state of Christendom stands in the way of evangelism. To them that are without it is a stumbling-block and an offence; to them that are within it must be a shame. The divisions of the Christian Church are never absent from the questionings of men in the matter of religion. They perplex and worry many earnest seekers after truth and often thwart a final decision for Christ and His Church. The one-ness of the Christian Church in fact and in act, in word and in deed, is a pre-requisite of a full and effective evangelism. The kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our God and His Christ only when the Church, which is the instrument of the Kingdom, is at unity with itself. Unity is the will of God. God's will is done in and through unity. The Christian churches must look within at their own great need, seeking prayerfully and penitently to come together in the Lord, that the glory of God might be made known in all things.

Evangelism cannot be achieved by expedients, stunts or special dodges. There is no easy way.

> There is no expeditious road
> To pack and label men for God,
> And save them by the barrel-load.

The call to the Church is to wait upon God with heart and mind and will all set upon fulfilling His purpose. What is needed is a new spirit, a new attitude, a new outlook, a new quality of life within the Christian Church itself. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. Wherefore, 'Come Thou Great Spirit, come.'

'Even so . . . come quickly.'

Literature.

THE JOHANNINE EPISTLES.

MANY Bible students, deeply appreciative of Professor C. H. Dodd's Commentary on 'Romans' in the 'Moffatt New Testament Commentary,' have been waiting eagerly for the appearance of his companion volume on *The Johannine Epistles* in the same series. Now that it has been published (Hodder & Stoughton; 10s. 6d. net) they will not be disappointed. Written in the most readable manner, and with the learning and insight for which Professor Dodd is so well known, the Commentary is a fresh and vital presentation of the Johannine theology as it is found in the three Epistles. Those who read his article on the authorship of these Letters ('The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library,' vol. xxi. No. 1 [April, 1937]) will doubtless look to see if he has anything to add to his argument, shared with Schmiedel, Moffatt, Charnwood, E. F. Scott, and others, that the Gospel and the Epistles were written by different authors, but they will find little. The limited scale of this series does not permit extended discussion, and, for the most part, Professor Dodd's argument remains where it was, based on linguistic differences, but more on the differences of doctrinal outlook in respect of the Parousia, the Atonement, and the doctrine of the Spirit. 'In all three the First Epistle of John represents an outlook widely different from that of the Fourth Gospel.' Those who dissent from this view will probably be fortified by the abundant instances in which Professor Dodd illustrates the agreement between the Gospel and the Epistles. The Epistles are dated A.D. 96–110 and assigned to an unknown Presbyter. It would be an astonishing performance, it is suggested, for a man of nearly ninety, an opinion which will be queried by Methodists whose greatest leader is a scholar and a statesman well past that age.

Most valuable is Professor Dodd's account of the doctrinal and ecclesiastical situation against which the Johannine Letters must be set, especially his description of the dissenters who denied the reality of the Incarnation and neglected the claims of morality. But the outstanding merit of the Commentary is the discussion and elucidation of the great passages in 1 John. In particular, the treatment of 1^{1-4} $2^{1f.\ 27}$ $3^{1f.\ 5.\ 9.\ 16}$ $4^{7-10.\ 16}$ and the examination of the difficult passages, $3^{19f.}$ $5^{6-8.\ 16f.}$ are noteworthy and illuminating to a degree. Possibly the explanation given to *hilasmos* (2^2) will provoke most discussion; for, while the word is rendered 'expiation' (not 'propitiation'), it is said to be 'little more than an index to the doctrine of the Suffering Servant' (p. liv), and to describe 'the means by which we are cleansed from the taint of sin' (p. 112). Doubtless this interpretation will come to some as a light from heaven, and to others it will appear to darken counsel. Every commentator, however, no matter how eminent he may be, is sometimes 'a stone of stumbling' and 'a rock of offence' to his readers; and sometimes also the exegetical rock falls upon the reader, and, as the Authorized Version grimly says, 'it will grind him to powder.' Nevertheless, it is safe indeed to prophesy that many pages in this stimulating Commentary will be marked for re-reading and fruitful reflection, and preachers especially will find it a mine of gold.

VINCENT TAYLOR.

BATTLE COURSES FOR PREACHERS.

No appointment to the Warrack Lectureship in the Church of Scotland fulfilled more exactly the intention of the founder than that of Dr. James S. Stewart. For he is conspicuous among the very small band of preachers to-day who have a record of sustained success in drawing and holding audiences by sermons at once earnestly evangelical and rich in content. One is glad to think that so many divinity students have listened to these addresses — *Heralds of God* (Hodder & Stoughton; 7s. 6d. net). Every faithful minister will find here a mine of suggestion on what and how to preach, and a helpful recall to the highest conceptions of what preaching ought to be. And they include much fitted to reach the conscience of such as aim low or with a bow slackly strung.

Dr. Stewart finds the characteristic feature of the world the preacher encounters to-day to be the tensions between opposing forces, between disillusionment and hope—a dozen eloquent pages; between escapism and realism—a very searching and practical section leading to a noble plea to realize the function of preaching; between scepticism and faith—here he stresses God's secret allies in the human heart. Then, after an inspiring meditation on the preacher's theme, the book

passes on to wise and pointed counsels on the preacher's preparation and technique and personal life.

Another book which covers much of the same ground is *In Training : A Guide to the Preparation of the Missionary*, by Rowland Hogben and others, edited by the Rev. A. T. Houghton, M.A. (Inter-Varsity Fellowship ; 5s. net). It has none of Dr. Stewart's *panache*, makes no attempt to charm, and reveals at times a curious intellectual standpoint, as when it gravely advises missionaries not to think that faith in God should lead them to despise or refuse prophylactic measures for health-preservation. The tragic death of the 'architect' of the book in China is just mentioned in an aside. And yet one can imagine its plain and candid counsels in their unvarnished simplicity and sometimes embarrassing directness making on mind and conscience as effective an impact as any eloquence.

The remark may be added that the following sentence from this book, 'A lapse from belief in eternal punishment . . . is . . . the chief cause of secondary interests displacing soul-winning,' might stimulate dissatisfaction with Dr. Stewart's sentences about 'the immutable gospel.'

R. W. Stewart.

PERSONALITY AND RELIGION.

The method of this book—*Personality and Religion*, by William Brown, D.M., D.Sc., F.R.C.P. (University of London Press ; 9s. 6d. net)—is in strong opposition to the belief, more common a generation ago than it is to-day, that things can be best explained by being reduced to their simplest elements. Dr. Brown, on the contrary, holds to the principle that in later and more complex processes is to be found the key to earlier phases, and that this is especially true in regard to mental activity, most of all in the sphere of religion.

In his analysis of the structure of the mind he is critical both of William James and of Ward, and his opinion is that McDougall has given the best presentation up to date of the character of the mature mind, although even the last-mentioned, he thinks, might with advantage lay greater stress on deep mental analysis. Our author's own emphasis is on the organization of the mind which reveals itself in increasing self-determination. 'Freedom,' he says, 'is a characteristic which gradually emerges,' and he understands a 'complex' as that which presents a hindrance to such emergence. His further psychological position is that 'volition is the entire mind and the entire character in action.'

His psychological discussions are followed by a chapter on 'Religion and Health,' in which he makes some very apposite comments on Christian Science and spiritual healing. Then—for some unexplained reason—he turns aside to the history of thought. He dismisses the philosophies of India in a single page, taking the conventional view that they are entirely negative and therefore irrelevant to his main purpose of analysis of the elements of the religious life, and hardly realizing, we think, that his own conclusions bear a curiously close resemblance to those of Indian higher religious thought. He gives in this historical excursus an exhaustive analysis of Aristotle's treatment of the mind, and brings the distinction between the theoretical and the practical life into line with his own main thesis.

In the course of the book a good deal is made of the distinction between individuality and personality. The first indicates a mere difference from other people whereas the latter unites us with others, with the universe, with God. It is 'the final determination which the individual has made, as it were, and produced in himself, and superimposed upon all that he has inherited from past generations and lower forms of mental evolution.' When the treatment broadens out from psychology towards ethics and religion, much use is made of the idea that personality includes *universal* elements, and that these constitute an inherent aptitude for religion. One of the best chapters in the book is a trenchant criticism of psychological theories which treat religion as merely subjective, and in pretending to trace it to its origins, only succeed in explaining it away. Dr. Brown holds that religion is, on the contrary, most decidedly objective, and cognitive, not pathologically but healthily, of an ultimate Reality. His medical experience, he says, has made him more and more convinced of this.

In his own final position he leans towards a positive mysticism, and a philosophical standpoint akin to that of Bradley. He is inclined to depreciate the value of the temporal, and he holds that the goal is the realization of the values of truth, beauty, and goodness. Religion is essentially the recognition that these values are to be found in the Being of God. If we can succeed in such realization that is the only kind of immortality we need desire, although the possibility of a more personal immortality is not ruled out. In any case we can be sure, and sure of this alone, of getting the kind of immortality our souls deserve.

The argument of the book is important and convincing. It is not, however, easy reading, and a re-arrangement of the chapters, as well as a clearer indication of the central plan, would have greatly increased its value for the average reader.

W. S. Urquhart.

AN UNORTHODOX PORTRAIT OF PAUL.

The Jew of Tarsus (Macdonald & Co. ; 10s. 6d. net), by Hugh J. Schonfield, is the second of three volumes projected by the author. The first was published some seven or eight years ago under the title, 'Jesus : A Biography' ; the third may be entitled, 'Crisis in Century One.' (We suggest that this title might be improved.)

Mr. Schonfield is a very learned writer. He is also a scholarly writer, though apt to follow bold imaginings. The present volume is a vivid and arresting study of St. Paul and his background. It is the author's endeavour not to be polemical or apologetical but to treat the great Christian

Apostle as a Jew and to place him in his historical Jewish setting. The result is to throw new light upon the Biblical story, yet at the same time to depart from orthodoxy somewhat startlingly in places.

The author's own *confessio fidei* might help us to anticipate such a result : ' I am a Jew, and one, moreover, entitled to be termed a Nazarene, since Jesus is for me the Messiah. But I am not a Christian, if that name is to be applied only to those who have subscribed to the dogmas of the Church in their full orthodox form. I confess the Unity of God ; not a Unity in Trinity.'

Perhaps the most startling of Mr. Schonfield's conclusions is that Paul at one time cherished the belief that he was himself the Messiah. That accounted for his breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Jesus. It was on the way to Damascus that the truth at last came to him, disclosing Jesus as Messiah instead of himself. Henceforth his own sense of mission had to be reviewed in the light of that significant vision. He was still a man of destiny, but now he was appointed of God as the personal agent and deputy of the risen and ascended Messiah. ' He thought of his status in contemporary terms as that of a trusted slave so intimate with his owner, and so fully in his confidence, as to be in effect his *alter ego*. He was the *eikon* (image) of Messiah, as Messiah (the archetypal man) was the *eikon* of God.'

As Mr. Schonfield works out his theme on such lines he says much that is novel and informative, but somehow he does not convince us that Paul may be numbered among those who in his own day entertained a mystical conviction of Divine appointment to deliver Israel and establish the Reign of God. Mr. Schonfield does not go so far as to say that Paul made the claim to Messiahship ; he might have made it had he not taken his fateful journey to Damascus ; till then he had ' hugged his great secret, and dreamed his dreams, while his piercing eyes grew yet more feverishly bright, and his spare frame more gaunt with prayer and vigil.' As we have said, Mr. Schonfield tends to use his imagination boldly. W. FULTON.

On a first perusal, the reader of Dr. Ignaz Maybaum's *The Jewish Home* (James Clarke ; 7s. 6d. net), may wonder whether it is to be included under the head of sociology, of politics, of ethics, or of religion. The truth is that Dr. Maybaum cannot separate them, and it is significant that he has chosen such a title for a general survey of Jewish life as lived in the consciousness of religion. He is justified by the stress which his faith lays on family life, and its bearing on that of the community as a whole. The dominance of the religious motive in all household matters is illustrated, not only in the first chapter, which speaks of the master of the house, but all through, in the discussions on birth, childhood, marriage, and death. Dr. Maybaum is familiar with Christian doctrine and theology, and frequently contrasts the attitude of the two religions to the matters he is handling, but always without the least trace of prejudice against the younger faith. He has little belief in Zionism, though he generously recognizes certain valuable and praiseworthy qualities in those with whom he disagrees. A Christian might find a serious point of difference in the subordinate position assigned to woman, and one or two other matters, but in general it may be said that Dr. Maybaum has given us a book of singular beauty, shot through and through with profound religious feeling. The translation from German into English has been made by Tilly Barnett and L. V. Snowman, and the three between them have produced a volume which gives even clearer insight into the best of modern Judaism than does the work of Rabbi Epstein.

The series of books on ' Religion in the Post-War World,' which began so auspiciously with ' Religion and Our Divided Denominations,' has reached its fourth volume, *Religion and Education* (Oxford University Press ; 8s. 6d. net). All the volumes are edited by Dean W. L. Sperry, and each contains essays by five different writers. The conditions existing in America are mainly in view, but since these are as prevalent elsewhere, the contentions and conclusions in these books are interesting to us on this side of the water.

Frankly, the volume on *Religion and Education* is disappointing. The first essay, entitled ' From Church to State,' deals with the revolution that has taken place through the eclipse of the Church and of its religious creed. The author does not regret this. The Church is a back number, but its values are preserved in the secular community without any religious sanction. Brotherhood, for example, is a feature of the modern State and can be assumed without the basis of a divine Fatherhood. The argument to this effect is a singularly superficial one, and the whole essay, which is entirely optimistic about the future triumph of reason as a guide to conduct, is intellectually unsatisfactory. It seems a rather absurd measure to include an essay on ' The Teaching Office of the Church,' dealing with its proper aim and methods in religious education, when the Church itself, for any useful purpose, has already been abolished in the first chapter by another writer. The severance of Church and State in America makes the problem of religious education a complicated one, and something of this confusion is reflected in the present book.

A manual of devotion for leaders of Youth has been compiled by Dr. T. G. Dunning, M.A., Director of the Baptist Union Young People's Department—*The Altar of Youth* (Religious Education Press ; 3s. 6d. net). It is divided into sections : ' Ourselves,' ' Our World,' ' Our God,' and ' The Horizon called Death.' Each of these sections has a selection of passages from ' Others,' famous people, and then passages from Scripture, and then ' our Response,' and, finally, prayers. One of the main principles in this compilation is a regard for the immature. Their interests are carefully considered in the language used and the

subjects treated. The whole thing is well done and should be useful for its avowed object. There are appendices giving calls to worship, offertory prayers, and benedictions.

Discussion Groups, with a list of subjects and discussion and book lists (S.P.C.K. ; 9d.), is very thorough. The subjects suggested are comprehensive, and divisions of each subject point the way and greatly help to give intelligent content to the discussions. A useful book.

We all regret, as Renan did, that so much of the Christian literature of the second century has perished. Of some authors, as of their writings, we know little except their names. Some fragments, however, survive in the form of notices or citations in later writers, notably—but by no means exclusively—Eusebius. Mr. Robert M. Grant, acting on the suggestion of the Archbishop of Quebec, has collected all the known fragments, and given us a very interesting and useful book —*Second-Century Christianity : A Collection of Fragments* (Translations of Christian Literature, ser. vi. ; S.P.C.K. ; 6s. net). The Introduction is scholarly and illuminating, and the plan followed excellent. It seems to us that, acknowledging the value of every part, the treatment of Gnosticism is outstanding.

J. R. Green, by W. G. Addison (S.P.C.K. ; 6s. net), is an informative study of the career of the author of ' A Short History of the English People,' written with admiration for his heroic victory over the ill-health which cut short his life, and with a conviction of the solid worth of his scholarship. If a reader lays it down with distaste as well as gratitude, it will be because it is written so self-consciously and not with the simple objective respect Green received from his great contemporaries. With less concern at exhibiting his own capacity for exact appreciation the author might have avoided prolixity and made his adequate and competent book clearer and easier. The occasional accents of patronage and bits of laboured smartness may be due to the same defect of taste which labels the helpfulness of prostitutes in the young East-end vicar's fight with a cholera epidemic as ' melodramatic,' and the frail Green's fall to the foot of a slum stair along with a heavy cholera patient whom he was trying to carry, as ' comic.' Bryce's fine tribute to Green is recorded : ' One of the charms of his company was that it made a man feel better than his ordinary self.'

Some admirers of the late Dr. G. Campbell Morgan may welcome *The Music of Life* (Walter ; 2s. 6d. net), the print of a lecture he claimed to have delivered seventy-two times. Others may think he might well have remained firm in his refusal to publish it because of ' my doubts as to whether there is any particular value in it.' It has some forty pages with divisions such as the *dolce* of babyhood, the *allegro appassionata* of youth, the *andante* of age, the chords made of such notes as innocence, merriment, vision.

Religious Convictions and Theological Doctrines.

By Professor J. M. Shaw, D.D., Queen's Theological College, Kingston, Ontario.

A dominant note in early Christian preaching and teaching was the note of assurance, of certainty, of assured certain persuasion and proclamation. This was so already, according to the New Testament records, in the very earliest or most primitive Apostolic preaching and teaching, that of Peter on the Day of Pentecost. ' Let all the house of Israel know assuredly ' (ἀσφαλῶς, ' beyond a doubt,' Moffatt and Weymouth), ' that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ ' (Ac 2^{36}). And in the more developed Apostolic preaching and teaching of Paul we have the same dominant note. ' I am persuaded ' (πέπεισμαι, ' certain,' Moffatt ; ' convinced,' Weymouth) ' that nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord ' (Ro 8^{38}). And again, ' I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded ' (πέπεισμαι, ' certain,' Moffatt ; ' confident,' Weymouth) ' that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day ' (2 Ti 1^{12}).

This is a note which we very much need to recover and re-emphasize in our Christian preaching and teaching to-day, in this day of post-war reconstruction—the note of greater assurance or certainty in our proclamation of the Christian evangel or message of good news from God to a sinful and needy world.

I.

Now a very first essential for the attainment of this greater assurance and certainty in the proclamation of our Christian message to-day is the need of distinguishing between properly religious convictions and theological doctrines or theories.

Theological doctrines or theories spring from the need of explaining or giving intellectual reasoned expression to properly religious convictions. But the religious convictions, based on Christian fact and experience, come first ; the theological doctrines or theories come second, and always lag

behind the religious facts or convictions. Hegel, the great German philosopher, stated in memorable words the relation of reflective philosophic thought to life in these terms: 'When philosophy paints its grey in grey, some one shape of life has already grown old; and grey in grey though it brings it into knowledge cannot make it young again. The owl of Minerva does not start upon its flight until the evening twilight has begun to fall.' Philosophy, he thus pointed out, is always behind life, a reflection upon it. So in like manner theology and theological doctrine always lag behind religious fact and conviction.

Further, theological doctrines or theories change from age to age with the changing thought-forms or categories of the ages. But religious convictions as based on religious fact and experience are abiding and permanent, for Christ and His saving work abides the same, 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever' (He 13^{8}). It is these abiding religious convictions based on Christian fact and experience, and not changing theological doctrines or theories, which constitute the essence and substance of our Christian faith, 'the faith which was once for all (ἅπαξ) delivered unto the saints' as the Apostolic writer puts it—to 'the saints,' notice, not to the theologians but to 'the saints' (τοῖς ἁγίοις Jude 5^{3}), that is to say, to those who have experience of God's saving power in Christ.

II.

By way of illustrating and drawing out somewhat more definitely and more in detail this point, let me refer briefly to two particular sections of Christian doctrine, which indeed are really and in the long run one—the doctrine of the Person of Christ or 'Christology,' and the doctrine of the Work of Christ or 'Soteriology.'

1. In the matter of the doctrine of the Person of Christ—to refer to this first—we have a variety of doctrinal expression in the history of thinking on this subject, according to the forms of thought or categories which dominated the age in which the doctrine was formulated or expressed.

In the earliest historic definitely doctrinal formulation, which we have in the so-called Apostles' Creed, which goes back in its original or basic form to the first half of the second century, we have this statement made about Jesus Christ: 'I believe . . . in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord,' where the adjective is μονογενής, 'only begotten.' Then in the next great historic doctrinal formulation which we have in the Nicene Creed of A.D. 325, we have a much more developed and drawn out theological or doctrinal statement, namely: 'We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is to say, of the substance of the Father (ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Πατρός) God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God' (the preposition in each case being ἐκ, 'of' in the sense of 'from') 'begotten, not made, of the same essence or substance with the Father (ὁμοούσιον τῷ Πατρί), through whom all things were made, both things in heaven and things on earth.' Then, passing over the Constantinopolitan form of the Creed, formulated in A.D. 381, which indeed is often called the Nicene Creed and is simply a slightly longer form of the Creed of A.D. 325, we come to what is called the Chalcedonian formulation of the doctrine of the Person of Christ in the year A.D. 451 in these terms: 'We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, perfect in Godhead and perfect in manhood, truly God and truly man, of the same essence or substance with the Father according to His Godhead, and of the same essence or substance with us according to his manhood . . . to be acknowledged in two natures, without confusion, without mutation, without division and without separation (ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως).' This Chalcedonian formulation has determined, and has been continued in substance in, our Reformation and Post-Reformation Protestant doctrine, expressed in its best-known form in the Westminster Shorter Catechism in the doctrine of 'two distinct Natures and one Person forever.'

Now, what I want to point out more particularly at present is that back of these varied doctrinal formulations or attempts at intellectual reasoned expression—with some of which we may perhaps have difficulty to-day in agreeing or expressing assent—is a common religious conviction about Jesus Christ, a conviction based on a common religious experience, the conviction namely that while He was truly man, 'very man of very man,' He was yet a unique man, the only one of His kind, so unique that to be true to the experience which they had through Him they had to say, as Paul said, that 'God was in Christ' in a unique way (2 Co 5^{19}), or, as the writer of the Fourth Gospel put it, that in Him God had become incarnate, 'the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth' (Jn 1^{14}). So that in walking with Him and talking with Him they felt they were actually and veritably—believe it or not—walking and talking with God Himself in human form in His Son,

> God's presence, and His very self
> And essence all-divine.

This was the gospel of the Person of Jesus Christ back of its varying doctrinal formulations or expressions.

2. Then, to pass from the doctrine of the Person of Christ to the doctrine of the Work of Christ,

from 'Christology' to 'Soteriology,' here too we have a variety of doctrinal formulation or expression, different 'theories or doctrines of the Atonement' as they are usually called.

We have to begin with, for example, the Ransom theory or doctrine identified with the Patristic Age, the Age of the Church Fathers, and associated chiefly with the name of Origen of Alexandria at the end of the second and the beginning of the third century, according to which the saving significance of Christ's work consisted in His paying a ransom on man's behalf for sin. We have again the Satisfaction Theory of the Atonement, associated chiefly with the name of Anselm in the Middle Ages, in which Christ's saving work was represented as a satisfaction offered to God whose honour had been violated through man's sin. Then we have the Penal or Penal-Substitutionary doctrine or theory, identified with the Reformation and Post-Reformation Age and associated chiefly with the names of Calvin and Luther and Post-Reformation divines, according to which, in the words of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, Christ's saving or atoning work consisted in the 'offering up of Himself a sacrifice to satisfy Divine justice and reconcile us to God.' We have too the doctrine of Vicarious Repentance or Penitence, associated chiefly with the names of McLeod Campbell and R. C. Moberly, according to which Christ offered on man's behalf to God a perfect repentance or penitence, and thus in McLeod Campbell's words made 'a perfect Amen from within humanity to the judgment of God on sin.' And then, over against these more 'objective' theories or doctrines of Atonement as they are called, we have various types of more 'subjective' or 'moral influence' theories, the best known of which probably is that identified with the names of Bushnell in New England, and Rashdall in the Old Country, according to which the redeeming or saving efficacy of Christ's work consisted in its moral influence on man, in the way of winning him from sin and from alienation to God through the moving manifestation of the love of God made in Jesus' life and death.

So many and varied are the theological doctrines or theories of Christ's saving work advanced in the history of the Church's thinking on this subject. Yes, and even within the New Testament itself and within the Apostolic Age we have variety of doctrine or theory on this matter. So that no one doctrine or theory can be specifically and properly called the New Testament doctrine of the Atonement. No one doctrine can properly be called even the Pauline doctrine of the Atonement, for in Paul's different writings or letters we have different doctrines or theories, different forms of thought or categories used to give intellectual or doctrinal expression to his view of the saving significance of Christ's life and death. Four terms in particular are so used by Paul, namely, 'ransom' or 'redemption,' 'justification' or 'acquittal,' 'propitiation' or 'expiation,' and 'reconciliation' or 'atonement.'

Now these different terms used by Paul are all, as Adolf Deissmann has interestingly pointed out in *The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul*, figures of speech or metaphors drawn from different aspects of the thought and life of the time in which he lived. The metaphor or figure of speech behind the term 'ransom' or 'redemption' (ἀπολύτρωσις) is that of the liberation or emancipation of the slave by purchase. That behind the term 'justification' or 'acquittal' (δικαίωσις) is that of the acquittal of an accused person in a Court of Law. That behind 'propitiation' or 'expiation' (ἱλαστήριον) is that of a votive gift or offering with expiatory value. And behind 'reconciliation' or 'atonement' (καταλλαγή) is that of an enemy being reconciled or placated through personal relationships being restored and rectified. These metaphors or figures of speech, at least some of them, may not appeal to our modern mind in the way in which they appealed to Paul and to the Jewish Graeco-Roman mind to which such figures of speech were native as they are not to us. But the point I want to emphasize and stress in this connexion is that these varied formulations of Paul, and of others down the Christian centuries, are all so many varied attempts, groping attempts, to give intellectual or doctrinal expression to a common religious conviction, and that the important thing, the thing of first importance, which they were concerned to proclaim and stress, is not the doctrinal formulation or attempted intellectual expression but the religious conviction which in various ways they were attempting to express, a conviction based on a marvellous new religious experience, the experience namely of being, as Paul put it, 'made nigh' unto God, or 'at-oned' with God, brought into new reconciled fellowship with Him through a crucified but now risen living Saviour and God.

This was the conviction, the properly religious conviction which Paul sought to give intellectual expression to in his different doctrinal formulations —formulations no one of which Paul himself would say, as indeed he did say, was fully adequate to express it, though they had different degrees of adequacy—no, nor all taken together, for the love of God expressed in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus was a love which, as he said, 'passeth knowledge' (Eph 3^{19}). And it is this same conviction which the other doctrinal formulations down the centuries have attempted in their own way, and in terms of the categories of their

different ages, to express, the conviction, namely, come to through experience of the saving power of Christ's life and death and risen living working, that God, the very God ('think Abib'), the Absolute, the Eternal, the creative and controlling Power of the universe, entered in Jesus Christ into human life and history, and through becoming Incarnate and sharing our sorrows and sufferings, and taking upon Him in some way which goes out beyond our full human comprehending even the burden of our sins, has brought us into such saving fellowship with Himself that we can affirm and declare that the greatest fact and last reality in the universe is not sin nor even the Divine reaction against sin but God's redeeming love, and we can say in the words of F. W. Faber:

O love of God! O sin of man!
In this dread act your strength is tried,
And victory remains with love:
Jesus, our Lord is crucified!

III.

Such is the tremendous central conviction and affirmation of the Christian Gospel or Evangel which we are called to proclaim and teach. Good news it is, amazing good news, almost too wonderful to be true, and certainly too great to be expressed in fully adequate intellectual or doctrinal terms. Yet true, incontrovertibly true, because based not first on our own thinking or reasoning, but on our experience of God's acting in His love and power in Jesus Christ; and as such to be proclaimed with a conviction and assurance which no scientific or philosophical arguments drawn from a lesser experience can gainsay or resist.

Such arguments indeed have their place and value, arguments as to the existence and character of God after the manner of the old so-called 'theistic arguments.' From evidences of intelligence and rational purpose in the world, for example, from the fact that the world in which we find ourselves is intelligible and rationalizable, in the sense that we are not put to intellectual confusion in our contact with it, men in all ages have argued to a supreme Intelligent Power back of all. From evidences of moral order and purpose in history too, in the history of men and nations looked at in the large, men have argued to a Moral Power over all working out a great moral purpose, 'a Power not ourselves making for righteousness,' as Matthew Arnold expressed it. And again from evidences of beauty in the world, the flowers of the field and the glories of the heavens, men have reasoned to a Power back of things not only intelligent and moral, but also æsthetic and loving and kind. Such and such-like arguments still have their place and value, so that we find present-day scientists and scientific philosophers like Jeans, Eddington, and Whitehead saying that behind the universe there must be 'a pure Mathematician' or a great 'Poet' or 'Artist.' But not so, as these scientists and scientific philosophers themselves acknowledge, do we arrive at certainty, at assurance about God and things spiritual. Along this line God becomes but a cold hypothesis to explain the world, a speculation, at most a probability, not a warm assured conviction. Such warm, joyous, triumphant assurance comes of the experience of personal communion or fellowship with God. It may be compared, it has been compared, to the knowledge which friends have one of another. It is not so much knowledge about God as knowledge of God; the knowledge of personal acquaintance and experience of the worth or value of God's presence and working in our lives, in particular of that disclosure which God has made of Himself in Jesus Christ and in the witness of the working of His Spirit in the life.

Whoso hath felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny:
Yea with one voice, o world, tho' thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

Striking Thirteen.

By the Reverend W. Challenor, Walkden, Manchester.

'But one thing I do, . . . I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'—Ph $3^{13f.}$ (R.V.).

Have you ever heard a clock strike thirteen? If you ever happen to visit the lovely village of Worsley, near Manchester, at one o'clock in the afternoon (or one o'clock in the morning for that matter!) you will hear the clock in the tower of the Parish Church perform this very unusual trick. And this particular clock has been doing it for nearly one hundred and fifty years. It happened this way.

Away back in 1759 the Duke of Bridgewater began to make one of the very first canals in England so that the coal from his mines at Worsley could be taken by boat to Manchester far more cheaply than it cost to take it by road. He was

helped in this work by James Brindley, a famous engineer who was a genius at planning canals, but could neither read nor write. The Duke and Brindley set up their workshop at Worsley and a very busy place it turned out to be. An army of workmen worked all day making and repairing boats for the canal and machinery for the Duke's coal mines. In those days there was no 'hooter' to call men to work; they had to listen for the chimes of the clock which stood in the centre of the little shipyard.

One day, at three minutes past one precisely, the Duke, who was a very stern man, was walking through the shipyard when he saw two men sitting in the sun resting after their midday meal. The Duke could hardly believe his eyes.

'Why are you men not back at your work?' thundered the Duke. The men scrambled to their feet looking very guilty and uncomfortable.

'We are waiting for one o'clock to strike, sir,' one of them said.

'But one o'clock struck nearly five minutes ago,' replied the Duke.

'We didn't hear it, sir,' the other man replied.

'Then I will see that you *do* hear it in future,' called the Duke over his shoulder as he strode away looking very angry indeed.

That very day the Duke rode into a neighbouring town and asked the clockmaker to alter the clock in the shipyard so that it would strike *thirteen* at one o'clock. The clockmaker set to work at once, and when he had finished the striking-wheel of the Duke's clock, instead of having only seventy-eight teeth like an ordinary clock, it was now the proud possessor of ninety! And those ninety teeth have gone on helping the clock to strike thirteen for nearly a hundred and fifty years. The old shipyard has now disappeared, but the clock has been found a new home in the tower of the church which was built by later members of the old Duke's family.

I am wondering if, when you are asked to help other people, you manage to strike thirteen, or if you merely strike one and leave it at that? I think you will know what I mean. 'Joan,' says mother, 'please run along to the shop and get the rations, I'm very busy this afternoon.' And you say—what? 'All right, Mummy, I'll go at once,' or 'Oh, bother! I'm just in the middle of an exciting chapter. I'll go later on.'

Then, there's the matter of growing up into the kind of man or woman Jesus would like you to be. Do you strike *thirteen*, or merely *one*? Paul once wrote in a letter, 'But one thing I do . . . I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' He set himself *one* thing to do, but he struck *thirteen* while he was doing it. He also says something about the trumpet 'giving an uncertain sound'—just like that clock did when it struck one. I'm sure that you will want to make up your mind to give a very *definite* sound in all you do for Jesus—doing at least twelve times as much as you are supposed to do—striking *thirteen* for Him so that there will be no doubt at all about the side you are on.

How Provoking!

By the Reverend W. S. Robertson, M.A.
Hull.

'Let us . . . provoke one another unto love and good works.'—He 10^{24}.

When we speak about 'provoking anybody' we generally mean annoying them in such a way that they promptly annoy us in return. Someone gets on our nerves, and we tell them so (as plainly as we dare), and naturally, they answer in the same sort of way, until there's a regular disagreement, if not an open quarrel. Or something happens to interfere with our plans, perhaps for an evening out or some other special treat, and we say, 'How provoking!' and wish we had someone to interfere with in return. That's the kind of provoking that Paul speaks about when he says, 'Love is not easily provoked,' or 'let us not provoke one another.' Take care not to get on other people's nerves, so as to annoy them; and don't be easily provoked yourself if they're sometimes a bit annoying towards you.

But there's another sort of provoking, which isn't a bad thing at all, and which another writer in the Bible tells us we *ought* to be always doing. He says, 'Let us provoke one another to love and good works.' And now let me show you what he means, by telling you about two small front gardens. Both of them are little pieces of ground, with a square of grass (including weeds which look like grass, but aren't) in the middle, a small space of border (in which you can try to grow flowers if they're hardy), and a hedge of privet bushes round the front and the side. And although they're small, these patches of land can soon get out of hand. They need attention, if they're to look neat and tidy and attractive.

Now during the early summer both the people at No. 25 and ourselves at No. 23 were busy growing vegetables in the back garden, and we didn't give much heed to these little squares of ground in the front—so that by the beginning of August they were looking rather untidy. And we both thought to ourselves, 'At the first opportunity we have we'll tidy up that front garden'; we thought like that for quite a while without doing anything about it. But then our neighbour at No. 25 had a few days' holiday, and he spent most of his time in the garden. And one of the first things he did was to fetch his lawn-mower and cut his little bit of grass in the front. And the result was that we in No. 23 began to feel ashamed of ourselves—we were quite pleased that our neighbour was making his garden neat, but it showed us up pretty badly. And on the following Monday (because Monday morning is a minister's Saturday afternoon) I borrowed someone else's lawn-mower and cut *our* little bit of lawn too.

However, that wasn't the end, because during that week our neighbour spent an evening or two in the front garden of No. 25 tidying up the border, making his piece of ground look neater than ever. And still we felt ashamed of ourselves—*we* ought to have done that at No. 23. And the

result was that, on the following Monday, we put on our gardening clothes again, and weeded our border and tidied up our plants until we were fit to be compared with the garden next door. And this time we weren't going to be left behind—'No (we thought), when we've really started a job, we'll finish it properly'; so out came our garden shears, and we trimmed the privet bushes around the front and side of No. 23. They hadn't been cut for some time, so they were fairly tough, and it came on to rain while we were busy with them—but we persevered, and we finished just as our neighbour was on his way home for tea. And then we had our reward, because just as he passed us he said, 'You know, you're putting us to shame at No. 25.' And during the next week, surely enough, out came his own garden shears, and he trimmed his own bushes after our example. And then people passing noticed these two front gardens growing in neatness and beauty together.

You can see what we were doing—we were provoking each other to good works. And our Bible tells us that it's just the same with our character, and the way we show our feelings. If we see that our own temper is kept under control, that we're gentle and considerate to other people—if our own garden of character is neat and attractive—then they will want to be like us. We can provoke them to love by being loving, provoke them to kindness by being kindly ourselves, provoke them to cheerfulness and courage by the way we smile and keep a good heart. Far better to be provoking in *that* way than in the unkind, annoying things. And that is the way of following Jesus, who by the beauty of His life and the care He shows to every one, provokes us all to love and good works.

The Christian Year.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Finding Things Unsought.

BY THE REVEREND J. DUNCAN PERCY, B.A.,
WEST HILL, OTTERY ST. MARY.

'And Saul's uncle said unto him and to his servant, Whither went ye? And he said, To seek the asses: and when we saw that they were not found, we came to Samuel.'—1 S 10^{14} (R.V.).

It is a romantic story, this story of the search for the lost asses, and of how it ended. Saul, the son of Kish, a young man of the tribe of Benjamin, went forth one day to seek his father's strayed asses. That was his only conscious purpose. But man proposes, and God disposes. Baffled in his search for the asses, Saul, with his servant, came at length to the seer's house. Apparently they hoped that Samuel would use his occult powers to locate the lost animals, and Saul is all unconscious of the high destiny awaiting him. But Samuel recognized in the goodly young man before him the called and chosen of God. On the morrow he anointed him to be king over Israel, and sent him away with the promise: 'The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt . . . be turned into another man.'

This, in brief, is the story. I wish to use it as a parable of a far-reaching truth. Let it symbolize the truth that we men and women often attain something totally different from, and sometimes much better than, the things for which we strove and hoped. 'It was not Saul alone,' it has been well said, 'who went forth to seek his father's asses and found a kingdom.'

1. Experience shows that while men are pursuing one end, they often achieve another and, it may be, a far more important one. Take an instance from the science of medicine. The cold air from a window left open in a laboratory destroyed the harmful bacteria in a certain culture, and the result was the discovery of that amazing cure for wounds—penicillin.

Now philosophers tell us that some of the highest values of civilization have been reached in this unconscious way. The events of history are seldom those designed by the actors on its stage. Tolstoy's great epic, *War and Peace*, centres round the invasion of Russia by Napoleon in 1812. The destruction of Napoleon's army and the salvation of Russia were brought about, partly by the penetration of that army too far into the country and too late in the season, and partly by the burning of Moscow. Tolstoy shows that this pattern of events was not foreseen and planned by any of the human agents in the great drama; not by Napoleon, nor by the Czar Alexander, nor by the Russian generals. 'The whole course of the invasion of 1812,' he says, 'from the battle of Borodinó, till the last Frenchman had recrossed the frontier proves . . . that the power which decides the fate of nations is not inherent in conquerors, armies, and battles, but has quite a different source.' What is that power? And what is its source? They are neither chance nor fate. It is the Living God who guides men and nations along paths which they have neither desired nor sought. 'God is working His purpose out as year succeeds to year.' We cannot get a true view of history unless we recognize the unseen hand of God at work in its events.

2. Without going further into the philosophy of history let us note some of the good things that may come to us when we are not consciously seeking them, when in fact we are looking for something else.

(1) Take *happiness*. No doubt happiness depends upon conditions which we can in part control. Bodily health is usually a condition of happiness, and still more is a degree of mental cultivation sufficient to keep us interested in the world which surrounds us—'this mighty sum of things for ever speaking.' But the most important condition of happiness is unselfish concern for other people. 'When people who are tolerably fortunate in their outward lot do not find in life sufficient enjoyment to make it valuable to them,' said J. S. Mill, 'the cause generally is, caring for nobody but themselves.' The truth is that our own happiness is a by-product of existence, and must not be made our conscious aim or purpose.

Happiness, like pleasure, comes when you are looking for other things. It comes to you when you are seeking to fulfil your duty, and it comes most surely, perhaps, when you are endeavouring to promote the welfare and happiness of those around you.

(2) Take *the experience of fellowship*, which is one of the best things that life can bring. 'The lack of fellowship is hell,' said Morris. Now the sense of fellowship, its joy, is like happiness in this, that it comes when you are seeking something else; you will not find it by going to look for it. So it is with all true, deep feelings; they come; you don't go seeking them, or, if you do, you miss them. We are not to be afraid of emotion in religion; perhaps nothing great is ever accomplished without it. But emotionalism, the cult of feeling for its own sake, the making joy, thrills, rapture, our end in religion—this is to turn religion into a form of spiritual self-indulgence. '"Seek God, not joy" is the motto of the saints, and,' says Evelyn Underhill, 'it is the experience of the saints that those who truly seek Him are led to joy in God's own time!' The sense of fellowship comes when a number of men and women unite in a common quest, or to fight for a common cause, or to carry out a single plan. Suppose a group of people in the church get together week by week with one aim, for example to search out the meaning of Christ's will for the life of nations, or by prayer and the study of the New Testament to help one another in the difficult art of Christian living. They are not thinking of their feelings. But, if they are in earnest in their aim, they will presently discover a wonderful sense of comradeship and the mystic joy of fellowship will be in all their hearts. It comes to them when they are seeking something else.

(3) Take *the problem of peace*, one of desperate urgency to-day. Our statesmen are dealing with the problem directly, and they are right in so doing; we must seek peace and ensue it. But, where direct attack fails, a stubborn problem can sometimes be solved indirectly, by turning the attention elsewhere. Dr. L. P. Jacks recently suggested that peace may best be secured by 'Inadvertence.' Something might happen in the soul of warring man, he thinks, perhaps a sudden realization of both the shame of his condition and the glory for which he was created, perhaps a compelling vision of the City of God; something might happen that would lift the nations to a higher moral level, where in fact war would be renounced and the foundations laid for a world Society of Friends. The suggestion is certainly in line with Christian hope and endeavour. Will not peace most surely be found when mankind aims, not directly at peace, but at that upon which peace depends, namely righteousness (which includes both justice and mercy or love)? 'The work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.'

Happiness, the sense of fellowship, and peace are among the good things that may come to us when we are looking for something else, as the kingdom came to Saul. There is deep wisdom in Wordsworth's lines:

> Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
> Of things for ever speaking,
> That nothing of itself will come,
> But we must still be seeking?

(4) Lastly, it is without their conscious seeking that the greatest thing of all may come to some—*the discovery, the revelation rather, of God and of His Kingdom*. Unlike happiness and the joys of fellowship God and His Kingdom ought to be our conscious aim. 'If with all your hearts ye truly seek Me, ye shall surely ever find Me. Thus saith our God.' The words from the *Elijah* are the burden of a hundred Bible passages. But in His mercy God also says, 'I am found of them that sought me not,' and many have so found Him to their glad surprise. 'I was following out my life,' said Gaston Frommel, a Swiss theologian, 'pursuing my own desires, when Christ advanced to meet me, placed Himself before me, and barred my way. He stopped me; He made a silence in my heart; and then He held with me a solemn interview in which He spoke as He alone can speak.'

Some such experience has come to not a few of late. Men have found Christ, or rather have been found of Him, in camp or on the battlefield, and the discovery has changed everything for them. It is likely enough that Saul, the son of Kish, had gone forth before to look for strayed animals, and had returned as he went without anything unusual having happened. But one day when he was so occupied God came to meet him, and, through the lips of Samuel, spake that which turned him into another man. Such a great moment of the soul may come to any man or woman; a call, a summons from God which, if heeded, will raise life to a higher plane, and will invest it with a meaning and worth which it never had before. But the call must be heeded. We have seen that Saul was not seeking a kingdom. But Samuel said to him, 'To-morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart.' There was an unconscious preparation for his great vocation. He was ready when the call came. The Divine call which changes life comes always as an offer, a solicitation awaiting a response, not as a compulsion. 'Behold I stand at the door and knock.'

> With parted lips and outstretched hands,
> And listening ears Thy servant stands;
> Call Thou early, call Thou late,
> To Thy great service dedicate.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Unconditional Obedience.

BY THE REVEREND W. H. MURRAY WALTON,
VICAR OF BROMLEY.

'I will follow thee, Lord: but . . .'—Lk 9^{61} (R.V.).

There are two claimants in the world in which you and I live which make absolute demands on the lives of each one of us. They are God and the Totalitarian State.

The Totalitarian State, in the words of one of

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the keenest thinkers of our day, 'lays claim to man in the totality of his being; it declares its own authority to be the source of all authority; it seeks to impose on all its citizens a particular philosophy of life; it sets out to create by all the agencies of information and education a particular type of man.' And if I may add it, it is prepared to use force to achieve its aims.

Over against this claim stands God's claim. Just as absolute in its demands, but making a wholly different approach. For its underlying thought is love, not force. It asks for and secures the free loyalty of man, because it believes that only in such a manner can the relation between God and man and between man and man find its fullest expression. At the same time God's claim on the individual does not ignore society—how can it when the underlying thought is membership in a family? But only in a relationship based on love, it declares, can the individual and society find their fullest expression and life.

This, then, is the issue, and though our English sense of independence makes us turn instinctively from the Totalitarian idea to the Christian, yet we do well to remember that the former claims the passionate loyalty of millions of our fellow-men to-day. It challenges us indeed to ask ourselves whether we are prepared to give the same devotion to the ideals we profess to make our own. A Chinese Communist girl, niece of a well-known Christian educationalist, lay in her prison cell on the eve of her execution as a Bolshevist. Around her were her sorrowing relatives. 'You are weeping for me,' she said, 'you should weep for yourselves. I am dying for a Cause; you will go on living for—what?'

Now if the Christian claim be true, then the value of our individual lives and the usefulness of the part they are to play in the world depend on the extent to which we discover and do God's will. This does not mean that along other lines we may not be able to do many helpful things; of course we can. But it does mean that the maximum value of our lives depends upon the extent to which we do with them what He wants. He asks for and expects unconditional obedience. As an old Methodist preacher once put it: 'God is the best Master in the world; but He will be Master.'

It is terribly easy to try and pass things off with a lesser obedience, and so miss the best of life, and in the story from which I have taken my text we have the examples of three men who did this. They were prepared to be His disciples—up to a point. 'I will follow thee, Lord, but . . .'.

The first of these three was ready to follow provided the cost was not too great. He volunteered his services; he didn't even wait to be called. St. Matthew tells us he was a scribe, that is a man with all the advantages of a good education. And evidently he was also a man of real sincerity; for as a trained and cultured graduate he would hardly have addressed a comparatively uneducated countryman by the title Rabbi, unless he had been absolutely in earnest. There is no reason whatever for us to doubt the genuineness of his intention. Our Lord must have known this; yet how did He answer him? 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.' Come, by all means, but remember discipleship involves a cross. As Dr. John Mott, this year's Nobel prize-winner as you may have seen recently, once put it: 'Christ never hid His scars to win a disciple.' To-day the call comes to the youth of England, as it did in the Great War, to offer their lives in the greatest Cause—the building of the Kingdom of God. It asks especially for whole-timers, and it does not conceal the sacrifice involved. But the tragedy of the young man before us is that with our Lord's answer the story comes to an abrupt end. He was ready to obey provided it did not demand sacrifice; and when he found it did, he was not ready to face the cost.

In the second case we have the story of a man who did not appreciate the urgency of the situation. 'Jesus said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.' The words 'Suffer me first' do not mean that his father lay dead at home, and so it would be only a matter of a few hours' delay at most—for in the East funerals are generally the day after death if not on the day itself—but rather that he was ready to follow when home circumstances were easier, when perhaps parental claims were not so strong. He quite failed to realize that it was a case of now or never. Jesus, at that time, was passing through his village on His way up by stages to Jerusalem and the Cross. The odds were that He would not pass that way again. He hesitated—and lost, unless he thought again of our Lord's stern words, 'Let the dead bury their dead,' that is, let those who are not alive to the situation carry on as they are, 'but go thou and publish abroad the kingdom of God.'

An opportunity lies at the door of the Christian Church to-day which may never come its way again. Take a single example from Africa. Even before the War had started Britain promised our African colonies not only education but a Christian education. Our leaders were seeing the effect in other lands of a purely secular education and all the evils that follow in its train. They were ready to pay the salary of every qualified educational missionary the Church was prepared to send out. The war has accentuated the whole situation. For as a result of it tens of thousands of Africa's sons have been taken from their homes and villages; they have been given education, and then taken overseas to fight what to begin with was a white man's war. They have been plunged into a world, of whose existence they never dreamed. In the course of all these experiences, largely through the splendid work of the African chaplains, thousands of them have become Christians. And now they have been demobbed. Are they going back to the old life of the village with its limited outlook and restricted opportunities to become the servants once again of the white man? Small wonder that the Government is perplexed and is calling more insistently than ever for Christian educators who can give these people the Christian education they need. If the

Church does not respond other agencies will. Some of you are thinking of becoming schoolmasters; here is an opportunity of work for the Kingdom of God on a scale we do not know at home.

The third man in our story was one who was prepared to follow—on conditions. 'I will follow thee, Lord; but—first suffer me to bid farewell to them that are at my house.' The condition seems wholly reasonable. Elisha when called by Elijah to become a prophet had been allowed to say good-bye to his people. This young man was asking nothing more. But the point is not that the condition was not reasonable, but that he made a condition at all.

How does this story apply to us to-day? I can well imagine a boy anxious to serve his fellowmen by becoming a doctor saying, 'I am ready to do all I can to help the sick, provided it is at home.' Yet the need of medical work overseas is infinitely greater. China alone wants nearly a million doctors and they are prepared to give the Mission Hospital a big place in the national planning, if only there are the men there to play their part.

Once again the Master calls, and He only asks of us what He was ready to give Himself. It is something more than good intentions, and all that reverence which we instinctively offer to One such as He. It is our obedience, the surrender of our wills and the offering of our lives. After one of Wellington's victories certain French generals, prisoners of war, were brought to his tent. With characteristic Gallic extravagance they said they were not ashamed to be beaten by the greatest general in Europe. Wellington heard them with the utmost composure and then said quietly, 'Gentlemen, your swords.'

A greater than Wellington stands unseen and says more quietly still, 'Gentlemen, your lives.' [1]

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

A Future above Anticipation.

BY THE REVEREND W. POWELL, M.A., B.D., SOUTHAMPTON.

'It doth not yet appear what we shall be.'—1 Jn 3^2.

The future is for us mostly unknown. We may predict some things with much probability. And we may feel sure of the ultimate trend of things. But that is as far as we can go. What will be does not yet appear.

Some have thought that if they knew all about the state of the universe at one moment they could infer with certainty the state of the universe at the next moment, and then at the next, etc. They have thought that the state of a thing at any moment follows of necessity from its state the moment before. But they overlooked a most important factor, namely, the nature of a thing, which is but very partially shown by any of its states. The nature of things is revealed to us piecemeal by the ways in which they behave in various conditions, so that to learn their full nature we must wait for further developments.

This is true even of what are called inanimate things. But it is more obviously true of living things. No one from the minutest examination of an acorn would discover that it would in suitable conditions grow into an oak-tree, nor could any one foretell by looking at grains of wheat the glory of the harvest. No one could see in the beginnings of any animal life whereunto these beginnings had the power to grow. It is only through subsequent observation that we can find out these hidden possibilities.

In human life this uncertainty is especially marked. The amount of variation and the greatness of the possibilities are far greater here than in any other form of earthly life. You may from general observation predict that granted favourable conditions the boy will grow into the man. But what sort of man he will be does not yet appear.

The higher the scale of life, the more difficult is prediction. Now the text refers to the highest of all, the life of the sons of God. Here, then, the future is more inconceivable than anywhere else. If we are sons of God, it is especially true that it does not yet appear what we shall be.

To be a child of God is to be a partaker of the Divine nature, just as to be a child of man is to be a partaker of human nature. Who, then, but one who has fathomed the Divine can foresee the future of God's children? Who can tell what the future manifestation of God in man will be?

All mankind are God's children, inasmuch as all have received the Divine nature. The image of God has been stamped on us all. But Christians are God's children in a special sense, in that they have received the nature of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. Now we hold that in Him we have the highest of all that has been revealed of God, so that any one who has received Him into his heart partakes of the highest that has been shown of the Divine nature. He, then, is a son of God in a fuller sense than those who do not share this experience of God. Another may show at present more virtue than the Christian, but the difference between them is that the one has in him the germ of the highest as revealed in Jesus, and the other has not. John, the Baptizer, was second to none among those of the old covenant, but he who has embraced the spirit of the Kingdom of Jesus, crude, raw, and very inferior to John as he may at present be, has in him an order of greatness far exceeding that of John. An artificial flower may appear more beautiful than the seed of a natural flower. But let the living seed have a chance to show what it has in it to become, and then see which is the more beautiful.

In our earthly life we are merely introduced to the wealth which is ours in Christ. It is destined to burst all the bonds of earth. It will overleap all the limits of the present state. It demands eternity for its full possession.

What lies beyond these earthly bounds exceeds our thought. It must do so. We cannot understand anything which we have not in some form already experienced. So in so far as the future

[1] A sermon preached to the boys of Malvern College.

state differs from the present, we cannot understand it beforehand. No communication from the other side could enable us to do so. Even the beginnings of the life after death baffle all our powers of imagination. An Indian officer who had seen much service returned to end his days in this country. He told some companions of skirmishes, battles, sieges, personal encounters, hair-breadth escapes, of the outbreak of the mutiny and its suppression. At last he paused with the observation, 'I expect to see something much more remarkable than anything I have been describing.' As he was some seventy years of age and was understood to have retired, his listeners wondered what he meant. There was a pause, and then he said in an undertone, 'I mean in the first five minutes after death.' It does not yet appear what we shall be at the moment after we have shuffled off this mortal coil. And much more is this true of what will follow.

We describe the Final Bliss mostly in negative terms. We say that there will be no sorrow, no tears, no parting, no death or funerals, no sin, no curse. But how short we are of positive ideas! If we do try to think positively about Heaven, we fall back on our experiences on earth. We think of Heaven according to the best we have known here. And this is right. Heaven will be the fruition of earth's best. The spiritual life there will be continuous with the spiritual life here. The essence of the life is the same throughout. Heaven will be the best that we have ever experienced on earth magnified far and away beyond our present powers of thought.

For example, we have seen on earth in some people a suggestion of Heavenly Purity, and we must think of a state in which that purity which has been followed afar off on earth will be fully reached. We must think of a commonwealth consisting entirely of beings better than the best of us on earth ever are. We must think of the sweetest fellowship that we have had with kindred spirits in Christ, and understand that this is a faint likeness of that above. This is as much as we can do in anticipating the Holy City which we are to enter. We cannot properly visualize what it will be like. Who can picture at all adequately a realm without sin? This world, in spite of sin, is a beautiful world. What of a world without sin! In spite of sin, man is sometimes very noble. What will man be like without sin!

Let us now make sure of accepting the Divine Sonship in Jesus, and the future of a child of God with its inconceivable greatness will stretch before us.

SEPTUAGESIMA.

The Call to Endurance.

BY THE REVEREND PRINCIPAL H. F. LOVELL COCKS, M.A., D.D., BRISTOL.

'. . . Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus . . .'.—He $12^{1f.}$.

In other places in the New Testament *endurance* is used instead of *patience* to translate the Greek word in our text, and I am going to use it here—'let us run with *endurance*.' When King James's translators wrote 'patience' that word had the strength of meaning and the heroic and adventurous associations that 'endurance' still possesses. But to-day, patience, though a virtue, is a virtue of the mild, domestic kind, useful for coaxing reluctant thread through obdurate needles, for piecing together the parts of a jig-saw puzzle, or for playing that card game to which its name has been given. *Endurance* is certainly the better word. 'He that endureth to the end . . . shall be saved.' When Jesus said that He was not thinking of the minor annoyances of life through which patience and a certain placidity of temperament will carry us, but of fiery tribulations and martyrdoms, He was warning His disciples that the world would persecute them even to the death. And at the time when this Epistle was written the prophecy of Jesus was being fulfilled. The Christian Church was being persecuted by the Roman Government. The writer therefore reminds his fellow-believers of the heroes of the past who through faith found strength for mighty exploits and constancy to support heavy trials, and he summons Christians to a race where the prize is won not by speed but by steadiness and stamina. 'Run with endurance the race that is set before you.'

What is the quality of this Christian endurance? Not every kind of endurance is worthy of our praise. When I read some time ago that a man had set up a world record by playing the piano for seventy-two hours without stopping, I was not stirred to admiration. A feat of endurance must serve some good end if we are to admire it. Let us now turn to something very different. Think of Captain Scott and his companions on the Antarctic snowfields, or of Mallory and Irvine scaling Mount Everest. These men lost their lives in feats of endurance which are now among the glories of our national tradition, and you and I are proud to belong to the race that produced such heroes. Yet the endurance of explorers and mountaineers is not of the same order as that of the Christian man. What is the difference? Perhaps this is a clue to it—that while we admire men like these we do not feel bound to imitate them. Most of us are quite unfitted for such feats. We have neither the physique nor the inclination to be explorers or mountain climbers; we are just not made that way, and we feel no shame. Now I know that some people think that Christian endurance is like mountaineering and polar exploration—that it is an achievement impossible except for a few choice souls; that being truly religious is like composing classical music or writing universal poetry—a gift possessed only by a genius here and there; and that if you do not happen to be born with the gift, you may confess that you are not a religious man with as little shame as if you were admitting that, being tone-deaf, you could not distinguish one tune from another. But this will not do. Christian endurance, though certainly a gift of God, is not restricted to seers and mystics, but is given to

everybody who is willing to accept it. Only a man of genius can compose symphonies, but by the grace of God the most ordinary man or woman may become a saint.

We can find a better parallel to Christian endurance in our experiences during the War. There we were—sailors, soldiers, airmen; workers in factory and mine; wardens and firefighters in the blitzed cities. We were not heroes, but only ordinary people with jobs that had to be done, even when the bombs were falling. Somehow we managed to keep going during those grim nights and days. We had an end in view, we were out to save our country and the world from Hitler. We also hoped that a better world might be born of the travail of those war years, but we knew that unless Hitler was beaten we and our children could look forward to nothing but brutal tyranny and the loss from our human existence of everything noble and humane.

The need for endurance has not passed with the passing of the War. We still carry a heavy load of shortages and restrictions, rationing and queues. Perhaps we long for the return of the comfortable existence we enjoyed before Hitler was let loose against the nations. But the pre-war world was not so comfortable for the hundreds of thousands of unemployed, and we know we ought to be ready to sacrifice a measure of our own comfort if that is the price we must pay for a New World Order that shall be more just to them. But there will be no New Order unless we all work for it with courage, devotion, and self-sacrifice. Can we do it? Can we endure? It is not war but peace that brings the crucial test of democracy. A dictator would make us endure—we should have no choice. But democracy, giving us our freedom, gives us the chance of shuffling out of our responsibilities and of grabbing a bit more for ourselves at our neighbours' expense. The wave of idealism that swept the world at the close of the first World War soon receded and left our hopes stranded. Is that going to happen again? The race we run is long indeed. We are building for our children and our children's children, and we ourselves may never live to see the result of our labours. Are we equal to that? For this enterprise we need a quality of endurance higher even than that which carried us through the War. And those who call themselves Christians must set the pace.

We are always greatly fortified by the sympathy and encouragement of our fellows. But can we endure when our neighbours have ceased to cheer us? Can we keep on running when others are falling out of the race, and are laughing at us for preferring the distant and uncertain prize to pleasures that may be enjoyed here and now? Can we endure when few seem to care whether we endure or not, and when all around us there are temptations to an easier existence and a safer way? In this warfare there are no medals to be won. Can we be faithful—

> in the deed that no man knoweth,
> where no praiseful trumpet bloweth,
> where he may not reap that soweth?

Earlier in this Epistle the writer speaks of Moses who at the call of God turned his back on the luxury and ease of Pharaoh's court and forsook the treasures of Egypt to become the leader of a rabble of runaway slaves. 'He endured, as seeing him who is invisible?—that was Moses' secret. The secret of real power in the things of this world is to have our citizenship in another; and he can best appraise the experiences and opportunities of earth whose treasure is in heaven. That eternal world which is our true home is very near to the Christian. He is not as lonely as he seems. A cloud of witnesses surrounds him, saints and martyrs cheer him on. Best of all, he can see the Captain of his salvation. 'Looking unto Jesus'—that is the secret. When our human strength fails Christ gives us His divine power; when disappointment robs us of our confidence He gives us the faith that overcomes the world. 'He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.' In that royal promise is our peace.

SEXAGESIMA.

The Most Important Thing in Christianity.

BY THE REVEREND JOHN L. RIACH, B.D., LARGS.

'Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.'—Lk 10^{38-42}.

In our English vocabulary not a few words are seriously overtaxed because of the many shades of meaning they have to cover, but it is doubtful if there is any so strained as the word 'Christian.' It is applied to a whole range of types, from immoral hypocrites, who have a delicate Church connexion, to saints whose whole life is dominated by Christ's spirit, and in whose bones the Christian Faith burns like a fire. Before we can become Christian, in this latter and highest sense of the word, Jesus warns us in the Gospels, that while there are several important things we must do, there is one more important than all the rest. The question is, what is it?

1. To some serious people the most important thing in Christianity in this irreligious age is a witness by Christians to indifferent and pagan mortals in the form of church-going.

Within recent years men have been treating the Church in the cavalier fashion of Colonel John in Stanley Weyman's *Wild Geese*, when he declared, 'If I am not one of your Church, I am a Christian.' Men have outgrown the need of the Church, is the popular contention, and they can be perfectly Christian without it. If so, then let us within it be honest, shut our church doors, and send our

Geneva gowns away as museum pieces. But, is this the case? For one thing, this assertion is not true to experience. Have you ever in your pilgrimage met any soul who cut himself adrift from the Church and became a better, more enlightened, more informed Christian? What is more, to believe thus is to contradict Jesus Christ; for when He declared, 'Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst,' He was informing the world that men had to get together; they had to have a Church if they wished to know Him and His Faith. To become an informed, developed Christian, church-going is not optional but essential.

But while church-going is important in Christianity it is not the most important thing, because a man may be an excellent churchman and yet ignore the elementary moral demands of Christianity. This was the burden of the Old Testament prophets' complaint against the people and the origin of their bitter feud with the priests. The people worshipped God at their shrines with munificent sacrifices, prayers, and praises, yet, encouraged by the priests, ignored God's moral demand to establish elementary justice throughout the land. Church-going, without doubt, is important in Christianity but the most important thing it is not.

2. Again there are others of a practical turn of mind who believe that the all-important thing in Christianity is good works. Their cry is, that if Christianity be a way of life, surely the most essential thing is that its injunctions be put into action as far as possible in an imperfect world. Who can deny that good works are a vital part of Christianity when the New Testament admonishes its adherents to be no mere hearers but doers of the Word? Yet, while good works are important they are not the most important, because a man may be a veritable holy busybody and yet ignore the religious demands of the Christian Faith. In this irreligious age men need constantly to be reminded that Christianity is not a mere code of morals, as they imagine in their ignorance, but a religion. Good works consist in putting the morals of the Faith into practice which, of course, is excellent. Still, a man may do so, and, exhausting himself in good works, be no more than a humanist who never prays, never seeks forgiveness, has no faith which throws him back upon God to do all, and thus flouts the religious demands of Christianity. This explains why Luther dubbed the Epistle of James with its constant harping upon good works as a letter of straw. In a Mediæval Church which counted merit everything, he saw men toiling at good works as the one thing needful while blind to the knowledge and importance of being justified by faith. None but another worldly pietist would challenge the necessity of good works in Christianity; yet none but a man who cannot distinguish between moral and religious demands would ever claim that good works were the most important thing in the Christian Faith.

3. The most important thing in Christianity is deeper than either church-going or good works. It lies in a man hearing God speaking His Word to him personally.

Throughout the Gospels Jesus was called different names. He Himself loved the term 'Son of Man.' The disciples addressed Him as 'Master,' 'Teacher,' or 'Messiah.' John in his Gospel, however, speaks of Jesus as 'The Word.' Religious truth is something we cannot arrive at by any process of reasoning. It must be given to us by God or we cannot have it at all. Two thousand years ago men were groping in the dark when the miracle of all history happened. God decided to come among men in the form of His Son and declare unto them the truth about Himself, Life, and the world. This Word, which God spoke to men through His Son has been preserved for us in Scripture. But what men do not realize is that God still seeks to speak to men. He seeks to take the same Word He spoke to men two thousand years ago through Christ and to address it afresh to us to-day.

We may read the New Testament as a dead letter. We can peruse it and feel that these were pretty words but, being addressed to men of long ago in a different age from ours, they have little relevance for us. But, we may read the New Testament in a different way altogether. As we read, we may feel God draw near, sense His taking the very words we scan from the sacred page and addressing them to us, challenge us with them, saying, 'This truth is for you. What are you going to do about it?' There was Augustine opening the scriptures and reading the words from Romans, 'Let us walk honestly . . . put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.' In a moment he was changed from the frustrated profligate into a Christian leader of rare quality. What happened? As he read, Augustine felt these words were not merely spoken by God through Paul to immoral Romans centuries ago, but were being spoken by God through Paul to him, Augustine.

When we go through such an experience, when we feel God take this truth and that of the Christian Faith and address them to us personally, and, storming our hearts with them, saying in no uncertain accent, 'This is for you!' that is the most important thing in Christianity, for everything follows from that. Church-going is a joy to which we look forward with eagerness, good works are undertaken with gladness and Christianity becomes the central concern of our life.

4. If this be true, then one question remains. How can we go through this experience of hearing God speak to us, personally, the truths of the Christian Faith? In an age when Bible reading has become something we grow sentimental about when we hear of it, as with Burns' *Cottar's Saturday Night*, but do not practise, there is one main way left for men to hear God speaking personally to them and that is through preaching.

A. E. Whitham declares that if any man goes to church merely to have his emotions stirred by a preacher he would be better to listen to Harry Lauder who is an expert in such an art; or, if he goes for intellectual stimulus he would be more

wisely employed in reading Dean Inge's *Plotinus*, which will tax the grey matter of anyone. Preaching, of course, should contain both these elements, but its main function is not to indulge the sentimental or the intellectually conceited until they nod in complete satisfaction, but to make men conscious of God speaking to them directly, personally, challengingly, the truth of the New Testament. And if this be the case, then the tragedy of our day, so far as the Church is concerned, is that while many are prepared to accept the Church's gift of social fellowship throughout the week, and pastoral attention, it is the few who wish preaching—the instrument by which men hear God speak His word personally and challengingly to them, which is the most important thing in Christianity.

5. Is this not the summing up of that Martha-Mary passage so oft distorted by people? Of course, Jesus was not decrying the good work of Martha in preparing a meal. How could One who healed and fed the bodies of men scoff at the preparing of food by which men live? But, Mary was doing something more important in the eyes of God than all Martha's good works; she was listening to His Word. Notice how Mary heard God speak personally to her. It was not through Jesus' example but by His speech or preaching. And what would be the upshot? Mary would be no idle pietist but would out-Martha Martha in her good works; be a living member of the primitive Christian Church: and Christianity would be the burning concern of her life. 'Mary sat at Jesus' feet, and heard His Word. Martha, Martha, thou art troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part.' To hear God speak the truths of the Faith personally to you and me, there is the most important thing in Christianity if we are to become the highest type of Christian.

International Meeting of the Society for Old Testament Study at Cardiff, September 9–13, 1946.

By Professor N. W. Porteous, D.D., New College, Edinburgh.

In September 1938 the Society for Old Testament Study, which was founded in 1917 during the first World War, held its coming-of-age meeting at Oxford under the shadow of the grim events which culminated a week or two later in the Munich Agreement. Several distinguished foreign scholars were present on that occasion and plans were discussed for world-wide co-operation in prosecuting certain of the studies which the Society exists to further. It is a sign, not only of the vitality of the Society, but of the determination and devotion which have kept the lamp of sacred learning burning in the war-torn European countries, that so soon after the termination of hostilities it has proved possible to hold an international gathering of Old Testament scholars at Cardiff. It met from 9th September till 13th September in ideal surroundings in Aberdare Hall, and, in addition to many British scholars, was attended by representatives from Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, and Italy. Christian and Jew, Roman Catholic and Protestant met in an atmosphere of cordiality and mutual esteem. Scholars whose presence had been hoped for and whose absence was deeply regretted were Professor Mowinckel of Oslo, Professor Albright of Johns Hopkins University, U.S.A., and Professor Eissfeldt, Rector of Halle University in Germany. The failure of the last-named to obtain the necessary permission that would have enabled him to attend was felt by all those present to be particularly regrettable. No one from Germany could have inaugurated more acceptably the resumption of those friendly personal contacts between German and other Biblical scholars which promise to be more fruitful in the future than they have ever been in the past. That this feeling was shared by those who came from countries which had felt the heel of the invader was a striking tribute to the integrity of a great scholar.

It was a fortunate circumstance that the President of the Society for Old Testament Study for the current year was Emeritus-Professor T. H. Robinson, who had already held the same office in 1928. No one has done more to make the Society the rallying-ground of Old Testament scholars in this country or to promote harmonious relations with foreign scholars. At the opening dinner at which Dr. Robinson gave an address of welcome, and various representative visitors, including the veteran Professor Eerdmans from Holland, spoke, a presentation volume of Essays on the subject of Hebrew Prophecy by certain ordinary and honorary members of the Society was handed over to Dr. Robinson in honour of his sixty-fifth birthday—a fitting tribute to one who

has himself done so much to further the understanding of the Hebrew prophets. Another interesting incident at the dinner was the presentation to Dr. Robinson by Dr. S. A. Cook of a medal from the British Academy in recognition of his outstanding services to Biblical scholarship.

During the three days of Conference which followed a total of twelve papers were read and a brief account of their contents may be of some interest to readers of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES. The subjects dealt with may be classified roughly under three main headings: (1) Old Testament Literary and Historical Criticism; (2) Archæology and Hebrew Antiquities; (3) Hebrew Religion and Old Testament Theology.

It was very fitting that, in the centenary of William Robertson Smith, S. R. Driver, and Sayce, Professor S. A. Cook, a pupil of Robertson Smith, should speak on the subject of 'Old Testament Criticism since Wellhausen.' Dr. Cook maintained that, while the Wellhausen literary analysis of the sources of the Pentateuch has not been seriously challenged in principle, his reconstructions of the history and religion of Israel have not stood the test of time nearly so well. For example, Wellhausen's sharp opposition between prophet and priest has been challenged, as also his tendency to associate post-exilic Judaism too exclusively with the Priestly Code to the neglect of the Psalter which was the hymn-book of the Second Temple. The controversy between the Pan-Babylonists and those who, like Wellhausen himself and Robertson Smith, looked to Arabia for the background of Old Testament religion has been resolved by the modern recognition that there were different cultural levels in Israel. Comparatively recent developments beyond Wellhausen have been the application of form-critical methods to the Old Testament and the discovery of ritual patterns by the application of the comparative method in the study of religion. We must not, however, ignore historical development. For example, the Second Isaiah does more than revive the old Mosaic pattern of thought; he has advanced to explicit Monotheism. Dr. Cook drew attention to the revival of interest in Old Testament theology. Criticism has tended to break the pattern which gives the Old Testament its value but the balance is being rectified. In this connexion it has to be noticed that the Old Testament in isolation is but a torso and should not be severed from its sequel in Rabbinical Judaism and in Christianity.

In the discussion which followed it was pointed out that Girschmann and Edward Robertson had suggested that the legal Codes of the Pentateuch might in some cases be contemporary rather than successive. A contribution by Dr. Ivan Engnell of Uppsala made it clear that a younger school of Swedish scholars is challenging the Wellhausen theory in radical fashion. He spoke of the first four books of the Bible as a Tetrateuch and grouped the books from Deuteronomy to Kings as a historical work emanating from a circle representing the North Israelite tradition. He took a similar view of the Prophetic Literature. We have to do in this case with the oral tradition preserved in different circles of tradition.

An extremely interesting paper by Professor Aage Bentzen of Copenhagen dealt with the cultic significance of the Story of the Ark of the Covenant in the Books of Samuel. It was argued that Ps 132, which is a 'royal' psalm of ritual character, comes from the ritual practice of the Sanctuary on Mount Zion which commemorated the bringing of the Ark to Jerusalem by David. In 1 S 4–6 and 2 S 6 we have a prose epic of the story of how Yahweh suffered from His people's sins by falling into the hands of the Philistines and delivered Himself from their power. In this event, as in the event of the Exodus, we have an 'actualization' of the old myth of God's battle with the Chaos-monsters in the Creation Story which is the main theme of the New Year festival hymns. This implies no denial of the historicity of these events but rather the historification of myth; God's acts are not mythical but are events in history. It is to be noticed that this interpretation of Ps 132 and the relevant passage in Samuel does not support the idea that Israel took over from Canaanite religion the myth of the dying god. Yahweh is a God of life; among the Philistines He demonstrates His unconquerable power of life. David does not act the death of the God but welcomes back the victor God. In this ritual, which David seems to have inaugurated, we get a glimpse into the way in which he seems to have consolidated his power. The prose narratives about the Ark, like those about Joseph, are to be classed as preaching. In Ps 110 and in Gn 14 we get a hint of David's policy of conciliating the Canaanites. The essential characteristic of Israel's religion is the tendency to move in the straight line of history rather than in the circle of Nature religion.

In a paper, entitled 'The Character and Composition of the Story in Genesis, with special reference to Gn 32^{23-33},' Professor P. A. H. de Boer of Leiden joined issue, on the one hand, with those who break up the unity of the narrative of Jacob's wrestling at the Jabbok into two sources, ignoring the clues which should guide them to an opposite conclusion, and, on the other hand, with Cassuto and Pedersen who suppose that the story describes Jacob's victory over the Baalim of Canaan on behalf of Yahweh. The short *perikope*,

Hos $12^{4f.}$, which deals with the same incidents, suggests, it was argued, that Jacob's god was El, not Yahweh, and that Hosea intended a polemic against the contemporary syncretism which identified the God of Moses with the gods of the patriarchs. The Genesis story is independent of the rest of the cycle about Jacob and has to do with a special cult in which a certain thigh-nerve is regarded as sacred. It has, however, been fitted very skilfully into its present context.

A challenge to the usual theory regarding the Israelite priesthood was made by Professor Edward Robertson, who described the period of the Judges as a mystery period in the history of Israel. The usual view is that, as there is no mention of the priesthood in the Book of Judges, it did not exist in the pre-monarchical age. Professor Robertson suggested that the high-priesthood in direct descent from Aaron through Eleazar was, and continued to be, located at Shechem, but that there was a conspiracy of silence about it, firstly in favour of the rival Ithamar branch which broke away in the person of Eli and became located at Shiloh, and later in favour of the priesthood of Jerusalem and its Temple. Eli, Samuel, and David were schismatics from the Shechemite point of view. In fact the feud between the Samaritans (originally Ephraim) and the Jews goes back to very early times. The argument was supported by reference to the Samaritan Chronicles and to Biblical and Rabbinic evidence.

Three papers were devoted to the subjects of Archæology and Hebrew Antiquities. Professor A. Parrot of Paris, a distinguished French archæologist, spoke of the excavations at Mari on the Middle Euphrates which were carried out under his own supervision shortly before the War. He drew attention to the curious coincidence that in the time of Hammurabi a people called the Bene-Yamina (identical in name with the Biblical Benjamites) is represented as being, like their namesakes, turbulent in character. Professor Parrot was impressed by the association of this people with Harran which figures in the Jacob narrative. In connexion with these Bene-Yamina there is reference to a certain *dawidum*, a word which may mean something like generalissimo. Does this throw light on the meaning of the name David? There is also the curious fact that the Bene-Yamina seem to have been specialists in fire-signals. In this they compare with the Benjamites of Jeremiah's time (see Jer 6^{1} and Lachish Letter iv.).

A most lucid and engrossing account was given by Professor G. R. Driver of Oxford of certain recently discovered Aramaic documents written on leather which are capable of being dated in the period *c.* 411–408 B.C. They throw light on the Persian administration of Egypt and deal with the control of the domain-lands by letters from an absent Governor called Arsham. We see that much of the business was really transacted by subordinate officials whose names appear in the letters. Professor Driver gave a translation of the documents, so far as they are decipherable, and contrasted them with the Elephantine Papyri which are mainly of a private nature. Professor Paul Kahle emphasized the significance of the fact that Aramaic had evidently become the *lingua franca* of the Persian Empire.

Professor H. H. Rowley of Manchester discussed the legal aspects of Ruth's marriage and suggested that the Deuteronomic law of ch. 25^{5-10} represents the limitation of a custom which is reflected in the story of Ruth. Boaz's problem was to prevent the next-of-kin from claiming the right to redeem Elimelech's property from Naomi. He did this by pointing out that, if he did so, he would also be bound to marry Ruth. The next-of-kin was unable to do both and Boaz was able to marry Ruth without interference from the former.

The paper by Professor W. Baumgartner of Basel may be held to form a transition from the sphere of archæology to the theological interest, which dominated the remaining papers read to the Conference. The title of his paper was 'Ugaritic Problems and their Bearing on the Old Testament.' The texts from Ras Shamra (Ugarit) are invaluable for our knowledge of contemporary Canaan. We learn a great deal about the Canaanite pantheon, about belief in the dying and rising vegetation-god, and about the way in which the mythology is related to, and rooted in, cultic practice. Professor Baumgartner argued, however, that the undoubted parallels with all this which we find in the Old Testament are to be explained, not by the hypothesis that the early ancestors of the Hebrews shared this type of culture, but by the view that the Hebrews took over the Canaanite culture, while preserving some of their genuinely Israelite inheritance, in virtue of which they gradually modified what they borrowed by a process of selection and transformation.

In a closely knit and characteristically original paper on the related Hebrew words *ḥesedh* and *ḥāsîdh*, Professor A. R. Johnson of Cardiff dealt with an important problem of translation which is vital for the English reader's understanding of the Hebrew religious thought-world. He argued that the usual renderings *mercy, kindness, loving-kindness* were inadequate in view of the fact that the word *ḥesedh* is frequently found associated with the word *covenant* (*bᵉrîth*) and with the root *'mn*. The translation *loyalty* would perhaps meet the case were it not for the fact that that word

does not do complete justice to the emotional quality of the word *ḥesedh* implied by its further association with the word *rḥm*. *Ḥesedh* also implies an oath by which one pledges oneself to exhibit this quality. In view of all this Professor Johnson suggested the English word *devotion* as a rendering of *ḥesedh* and translated the corresponding word *ḥāsîdh* as a *devotee* or the *devout*.

The author of the present article, in a paper entitled 'Towards a Theology of the Old Testament,' spoke of the recent attempts, such as Eichrodt's, to produce theologies of the Old Testament offering a cross-section of Old Testament religion. He drew attention to the very different principle governing such a work as Vischer's *Das Christuszeugnis im Alten Testament*, namely, that Old Testament Theology should be based on Christological exegesis. Vischer, however, has a somewhat unhistorical conception of revelation. More recently it has been claimed that what is needed is not a Theology of Response but a Theology of the Word of God. This is clearly intended to counteract the view that religion is an art of which there are specially qualified practitioners. The way to avoid this error, however, is not to leave the human response out of account but to lay the emphasis on the faithful community as the creation of the Word rather than on highly endowed individuals. The Old Testament theologian must utilize the results of inquiries into Hebrew psychology and Hebrew religious institutions so as to understand the thought world of the Hebrew believer, and in this way determine what is distinctive in it. This distinctiveness must be used to illuminate the central concrete fact of that new community life which acted like a leaven within Israel.

Professor J. Coppens, O.P., of Louvain contributed a brilliant discussion of the nature of the sin of paradise. He suggested answers to two problems raised by the relevant passage in Gn 3: (1) the knowledge of good and evil is the synthetic knowledge which comes from an experimental study of good and evil; (2) the actual sin of our first parents consisted in an opposition to the fundamental laws of married life, mutual fidelity of man and woman and the obligation of procreation. Professor Coppens made use of certain facts of Palestinian archæology and of a text from Ras Shamra in demonstrating his thesis.

Finally, brief reference must be made to the beautiful and devout paper which Professor Eissfeldt had sent and which was read for him by Professor North. It consisted of a statistical study of the phrase 'My God' in the Old Testament, designed to determine the varying levels of religious value implied. The evidence was arranged to exhibit how the phrase seems to have undergone a singular deepening and ripening of its meaning, though Professor Eissfeldt warned his hearers that in the history of religion there is no development following fixed laws. It is by no means certain that the most intimate use of the phrase in the Old Testament is the latest. Still more important than the thesis which Professor Eissfeldt set out to prove was the indirect evidence his paper provided of the way in which a great scholar, living through a period of extreme distress and strain, had fortified himself by reflection upon the deepest realities of the religious life as they are witnessed to in the Old Testament. One came away from a memorable gathering with the feeling that this union of religious faith and scholarship augured well for the future of Biblical study.

Contributions and Comments.

Comments on 'The Second Advent' by Dr. T. F. Glasson.

I HAVE found the book very interesting and on several points enlightening, and much in it receives my hearty assent. But I should be grateful if the writer would give us the result of his consideration of the following points:

1. How can 'Coming in the clouds' when mentioned after 'sitting at God's right hand' mean coming to God to receive kingship, since kingship is already implied by sitting at God's right hand? It is not said that the Son of Man will come to God, but simply that He will come. Therefore may we not presume that the picture is of His coming earthwards? I understand the picture in a spiritual sense.

2. Granted that Matthew stresses apocalyptic, are we justified in assuming so readily that he does so wrongly? The Son of Man coming in His kingdom in Matthew seems a legitimate expansion of the Kingdom of God coming with power in Mark. Mark himself speaks of the Son of Man coming in the glory of His Father.

3. When Matthew and John ascribe judgment to Christ, are they not right in doing so? By whom but by the Perfect Man can men fairly be judged? Do not the passages about confessing and denying and being ashamed ascribe judgment to Christ in different language?

4. Dr. Glasson allows that there must be a

consummation still to come. Must not this include the aspect of Final Judgment? How can any one's part in the cosmic process be fully assessed till the process is completed?

5. The writer also says that some conception of the last things would be an early need of the young community. Is it not probable therefore that Jesus said something in His teaching to meet this need? I believe that the saying about the day and the hour refers to the consummation.

6. It is true that much that Jesus predicted was of the mighty development of His power and of the New Age which took place soon after His death. Should we not see how much even of what is alleged to be added to His sayings can be understood to refer to this development, remembering that Christ's way of interpreting prophecy was spiritual? Should we not see how far a spiritual interpretation can apply to words put in His mouth? If we do this, we may not feel obliged to regard so much material as unauthentic. Much imagery in Old Testament prophecy is to be understood poetically and spiritually.

W. POWELL.

Southampton.

A Reply to Mr. Powell's Comments.

THERE is much to be said for the method which Mr. Powell advocates under No. 6, and it will be convenient to refer to this first as it affects some of the earlier points. Those who feel obliged to regard all the statements attributed to our Lord as authentic may still interpret them in a symbolic way. Difficulties have often been needlessly created by taking as literal what was originally spoken in metaphor. A good illustration of the Semitic way of putting things is provided by the following epitaph on a rabbi: 'Son of Sion, before this stone weep for the sun buried beneath the dust of the earth; the firmament was clothed with darkness, the constellations were ashamed: the moon blushed; on the day when the glory and crown of the Law was buried' (quoted in Gore's *Belief in Christ*, 140). This means that the death of the rabbi was a very sad event! Remembering such usages it would be possible for us to take even those phrases which Synoptic criticism suggests are secondary and to regard them as a poetical way of setting forth the idea of ultimate triumph.

The path I have followed, however, is to apply the commonly accepted principles of Gospel criticism in order to get as near as possible to the words of Jesus. Thus, (*a*) if it is true that Matthew and Luke are in many passages based upon Mark, it is wise to attach most importance to the Marcan form of such passages; this is quite an objective criterion and it applies to subjects which have no connexion with eschatology. *E.g.*, Lk 8^{12b} ('that they may not believe and be saved') is almost certainly a Lucan addition. (*b*) Again, it is suspected that in some cases the interpretations now attached to parables should be regarded as expansions of the original words of our Lord, and this view was arrived at without any thought of eschatology. (*c*) Once again, when we have sayings of Jesus transmitted in two forms, along two lines of tradition, it is helpful to compare them, and we shall feel more confident about the common element than about some feature peculiar to one version.

Now the striking thing is that when we frankly apply these tests to the Gospel material the apocalyptic element is immediately affected and shown to be in many cases secondary. *E.g.*, Mk 13^{1-4} is concerned solely with the destruction of the Temple; the parallel in Mt 24^{1-3}, which is derived from Mark, contains the words 'Parousia' and 'end of the age'—two expressions found only in Matthew among the Evangelists. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Matthew is responsible for these additions and modifications. The tendency might easily have been the other way, reducing the eschatology; in that case the appropriate conclusion would have to be drawn. The matter is only settled by an appeal to the facts and the conclusion is as objective as anything can be.

Other passages should probably be interpreted without reference to the Parousia, *e.g.*, Lk 13^{35b}; I accept these words exactly as they stand, but agree entirely with Otto, Goguel, and others that they did not originally refer to the Parousia. Here, and in many other places, the question is not one of excision at all, but of interpretation. These and similar considerations make it a matter of grave doubt whether Jesus Himself prophesied His glorious descent from heaven.

The demonstration in Part 1 that the Messiah's Parousia was not a current Jewish view, that it was not there for Jesus to take over, makes it imperative to find very strong evidence to convince us that He originated it. Moreover, we find (Part 3) that the Parousia doctrine of the Epistles is taken from the Old Testament prophecies of the coming of God, which account for every detail of the imagery and the language.[1] Putting these two together we can, I think, bring a more definite answer to the question left open from the discussion of the Gospels. Further, we can now explain the tendency traced in the Gospels to modify here and there our Lord's words in the direction of the Church's belief. Literary criticism alone cannot settle the question; as the Form Critics insist we must take into account the Church situation in which the tradition took shape.

2. In the light of the foregoing one hesitates to speak of 'legitimate expansions.' The passage in which Mark speaks of the Son of Man coming in the glory of His Father has a doublet in Q, in which the Parousia does not appear, as has often

[1] 'The Christians took over the O.T. doctrine of the Advent of the Lord, making the single adjustment that the Lord was the Lord Jesus' (p. 176). I welcome the verdict of THE EXPOSITORY TIMES review that the book 'conclusively shows that all the Parousia doctrine in 1 and 2 Thessalonians comes from the Old Testament.'

been pointed out. The Q form, moreover, does not imply more than that the Son of Man is the chief witness or 'the advocate of the faithful before God.'

3. It should be noticed that the book is about origins. In saying that certain beliefs originated in the Early Church or in its interpretation of the Old Testament, and not in the teaching of Jesus, I am not necessarily proving them to be untrue. Men sometimes reach the truth by a faulty process, or believe the right things for the wrong reasons. I believe that Christ is the Judge of men, but that He did not explicitly refer to Himself in this way. It is vital to observe this distinction in a discussion of origins. Some of Mr. Powell's points cover a wider field than my own limited inquiry, and open up matters which the theologian rather than the Bible exegete has to consider, for instance the question, 'By whom but by the Perfect Man can men fairly be judged?' Yes, John and Matthew were right in ascribing judgment to Christ; but there are serious doubts as to whether He referred to Himself in this way explicitly, though He may have done so implicitly. In any case, this particular matter does not affect the main argument of the book; I would call attention to a sentence on p. 133 where the subject of judgment is being dealt with, 'The question we have been discussing is whether Jesus clothed these thoughts in a certain way.' We may believe in the fact of judgment—and that Christ is the Judge; but this does not necessarily involve a physical descent from the sky and a great assize. The values which the Advent doctrine has preserved through the centuries (the final victory of Christ, the fact of judgment, the assurance of re-union) all remain, even though we have to express them in a different way. It should be noted that the Epilogue, in which I admittedly encroach upon the ground of the constructive theologian, does not necessarily follow from the main body of the work; it would be possible to accept the central argument and to write quite a different Epilogue.

4. A consummation in which God is finally all in all contains 'the aspect of Final Judgment' in the sense of a vindication of the right and discrediting of the evil, but not necessarily (in my opinion) in the sense of a detailed assessment of millions of individual lives.

5. I agree that Mk 13^{32} may refer to the final consummation and I state on p. 98 that the words 'may have been an answer to a question about the end of the world or the last day.'

1. Mr. Powell is right, I think, in interpreting 'spiritually' the words of Jesus to the High Priest. The co-ordination of the words 'sitting' and 'coming,' and the phrase 'from now' (found in Matthew and Luke),[1] make it very difficult to accept a literal interpretation. Wellhausen and others have queried the authenticity of the words; and Luke's version, which is probably from a non-Marcan source (like much of his Passion story), includes the session on the right hand of God but not the coming with clouds. But if we accept both clauses it seems legitimate to go back to the original passages which they reflect, Ps 110 and Dn 7^{13}. In the former of these God invites 'my Lord' to sit on His right hand; in the latter 'one like unto a son of man' approaches the Ancient of Days and is given dominion and glory. So that in both passages the same idea of enthronement is represented. It is true one might have expected them in reverse order. But though Mr. Powell envisages a different picture we both appear to reach the same result in the end, that Jesus in the moment of apparent defeat announces the certainty of vindication and triumph. In Dn 7 the coming of the Son of Man stands for the emergence to victory of the divine community, just as the 'coming' ($v.^3$) of the beasts stands for the emergence to world-power of the pagan empires. The language is obviously symbolic and, as Dr. C. H. Dodd says, 'we may suppose it was equally symbolic in the mouth of Jesus' (*Companion to the Bible*, ed. T. W. Manson, 375).

However, I do not think that differences about isolated passages need imperil the main lines of the case propounded. There is plenty of room within the framework for variations on detail, and for the view that some misunderstood word of Jesus played a part. Thus Dr. E. L. Allen makes the suggestion (in a private communication) that our Lord's predictions of triumph beyond the Cross, which were actually fulfilled in the Resurrection, may have been of so vague a kind that some further fulfilment was looked for.

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[1] And in two authorities in Mark; see S. C. E. Legg's edition of Mark with critical apparatus.

Entre Nous.

Who wrote the Fourth Gospel?

Mr. Hugh Redwood has written a very interesting book, *The Book of Lazarus* (Walter; 6s. net). It consists of two parts: one discussing the authorship of the Gospel, the other giving a paraphrase of it in modern speech. Mr. Redwood contends that the author of the Gospel was Lazarus, and if this will be found startling, it will at least not be considered far-fetched. His argument, stated in the barest essentials, is briefly as follows. First, John's character is not that of the 'beloved disciple.' It was stormy, aggressive; he was a 'son of thunder.' We are told that Jesus loved Lazarus; we are never told that He loved John. In the first half of the Gospel there is no mention of the 'disciple

whom Jesus loved.' We hear of him only after we have been introduced to Lazarus. The home at Bethany was the centre of the life of Jesus in its closing phase. The raising of Lazarus is the central point of the narrative in 'John.'

Further, only a highly educated man could have shaped and written the Gospel. Only a highly educated man could have written the Prologue. Now there is some reason for believing Lazarus to have been a Pharisee. And a Pharisee would have possessed the necessary qualifications. But John did not. He was a fisherman and, according to Ac 4^{13}, was 'unlearned and ignorant.' Moreover, we are told in ch. 18, vv. 15 and 16 that after the arrest of Jesus, Peter went to the house of Caiaphas in company with 'another disciple' who 'was known unto the High Priest.' But why should a Galilean fisherman have the entrée to the High Priest's house? On the other hand, a Pharisee might well have it.

Further, we read that at the supper at Bethany 'Lazarus was one of them that sat at table with him.' He would on that occasion naturally sit at the right hand of Jesus or, in the Eastern phrase, 'leaning upon His bosom' (derived from the reclining position adopted by guests at meals). So did the disciple whom Jesus loved at the Last Supper.

Again, John had no home near Jerusalem. His home was at the Sea of Galilee. So when Jesus committed His mother to the care of the beloved disciple, Mary did not go north with John. She was still at Jerusalem at the time of the Ascension. And when we read that 'from that hour' Mary went with the beloved disciple to his own home, it is in the highest degree probable that the home to which she went was near Jerusalem.

These are some of the considerations that Mr. Redwood urges in favour of his own strong conviction that the Fourth Gospel is the work of Lazarus. He takes many references in the Gospel which are usually interpreted as applying to John and contends that in all cases they are much more intelligible if they are seen to refer to Lazarus.

It should be added that the book is well worth buying for its delightful paraphrase of the Gospel narrative. F. J. Rae.

Paul's Conversion.

'It was somewhere near the city that a brilliant flash of lightning out of the mid-day sky discharged its electricity into the earth close by, hurling at least one of the travellers to the ground. An unfamiliar voice was heard speaking, yet there was no stranger present. The voice spoke through the mouth of Saul fallen into a semi-trance by the shock acting on his weakened constitution. It was like the altered voice coming from a medium when a spirit entity is held to be in possession. The words used were in the homely Aramaic, but they included a phrase from the Greek drawn up from boyhood's memories lying in the subconscious. The voice put in express terms the inner conflict which had been proceeding: it said, "Saul, Saul, why are you hunting me? You only hurt yourself kicking against the goad." "Who are you?" the mind of the stricken man inquired. And the voice replied, "I am Jesus, whom you are hunting." The brain of Saul struggled with this. "Sir, what would you have me to do?" The answer came, "Get up, and go into the city, and you will be told what to do."

'"Get up, sir, get up!" Saul was jolted into consciousness by the anxious summons of his company, and a hand that shook him by the shoulder. "Get up, and let us go into the city!" The voices had merged and blended. Saul rose slowly to his feet; but all about him there was darkness: he was temporarily blinded.

'So they took him by the hand, and led him into Damascus, to the house of Judas in the street called Straight.'[1]

'Sitting Down!'

Timothy Richard, in his efforts at famine relief in China, was baffled by the disorderliness of the crowds that beset him until he read at morning worship the passage about our Lord feeding the multitudes, where *He made them sit down*. Like a flash of lightning the secret of sitting down was revealed. A sitting crowd cannot crush. Jesus and twelve men managed to feed five thousand, without food tickets, without being mobbed. For the whole of his life afterwards Timothy Richard held the highest opinion of the common sense of Jesus of Nazareth.[2]

The Lost Coin (Luke xv. 5).

This little bit of silver must have been one of the coins which Jewish, and indeed other Eastern women, sew on to their head-dresses. Decent women were not seen, even much at home, without these snoods, which is why the loosened hair of the woman at the Master's feet is noted. There were no bank accounts or post-office savings banks for women in those days; their economic earnings were very small. . . . In Judea a bride came to her husband with at least ten silver coins sewn round her head-band . . . and her husband knew just how many there were, for he would see them. . . . Woe betide the woman who lost her coins; her husband immediately suspected her of a wrong use of them; and the laws of divorce in the Master's day were so heavily loaded against the wife that a man might divorce his wife if but one of those marital coins was missing from her headgear. That was why this woman in the Master's sharply drawn tale was sweeping so desperately.[3]

[1] Hugh J. Schonfield, *The Jew of Tarsus*, 90.
[2] Lady Hosie, *Jesus and Woman*.
[3] *Ib.*

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